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WORKS

OF THE

Long-Mournful and Sorely-Diſtreſſed

ISAAC PENINGTON,

WHOM

The LORD, in his tender Mercy, at length viſited and relieved by the Miniſtry of that deſpiſed People called

QUAKERS;

AND IN THE

SPRINGINGS of that LIGHT, LIFE, and HOLY POWER in him, which they had truly and faithfully teſtified of, and directed his Mind to, were theſe Things written;

AND

Are now publiſhed as a thankful Teſtimony of the Goodneſs of the LORD unto him, and for the Benefit of others.

"They alſo that erred in Spirit, ſhall know Underſtanding; and they that "murmured, ſhall learn Doctrine." Iſai. xxix. 24.

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SOME

THINGS

OF

GREAT WEIGHT

AND

CONCERNMENT to ALL;

Briefly opened and held forth

From a true Senſe and Underſtanding,

FOR THE

Healing of the Ruins and Breaches, which the Enemy of Mankind hath made in MENS Souls.

AS

I. Some Aſſertions concerning the Principle and Way of LIFE.
II. Some further Directions to CHRIST, the Principle and Fountain of LIFE.
III. The End of CHRIST's Manifeſtation, his Salvation, and whom he ſaves.
IV. Three Queſtions anſwered, concerning Juſtification.
V. Of the pure, conſtant, eternal, unchangeable Nature of God's Truth.

Written in the Time of my Confinement in Ayleſbury, when Love was working in me, and the Life of God in me travailing and wreſtling with the Lord for the Salvation of Others.

By ISAAC PENINGTON.

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SOME THINGS OF GREAT WEIGHT AND CONCERNMENT to ALL.

Some ASSERTIONS concerning the PRINCIPLE and WAY of LIFE.

THAT it is a great and hard matter to come into a capacity of knowing and receiving the truth. It is no hard matter to take up any religion that a man finds in the world. To read ſcriptures, to believe what a man finds related there, according to his underſtanding of them; yea, to believe that he hath the light and help of the Spirit in his reading and underſtanding; to apply himſelf alſo to practiſe and obſerve what he finds therein required; and to aim at holineſs, &c. this is no hard matter; every man that is ſerious, and ſeeks religion of any kind but in the weight of a man's ſpirit, may go thus far. But all this adminiſters not the true capacity, but he that meets with it, muſt go farther than thus.

2. That which gives the true capacity is a principle of life from God, and there alone, and no where elſe, can man meet with it and receive it. This principle is the ſeed of the kingdom, or heavenly leaven, with which the mind muſt be in ſome meaſure leavened, ere it can come into a true capacity of underſtanding and receiving the truth. And in this leaven muſt it abide and grow up, if it abide and grow in the true knowledge, &c.

3. That from this principle, and in this principle, not only the true light and knowledge of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt and all ſpiritual things is given and received; but alſo the true faith, the true love, the true ſanctification, the true juſtification, the true peace, the true joy, &c. And what of theſe is not received and held here, is not of the truth, but a garment of mens own forming, and not the covering of the Spirit.

4. That the Spirit himſelf ſows this principle, and is received in this principle. And he that receives this principle, and is born of this principle, receives and is born of the Spirit; and he that receives it not, nor is born of it, neither hath received, nor is born of the Spirit; but is but in the imagination and ſelf-conceit about the things of God, but is not in the truth, as it is in Jeſus.

5. That in this principle the new covenant is made with the ſoul and entered into; and he that receives this principle from the hand of God, receives life, and enters into the covenant of life, and feels the pure fear, wherein God cleanſeth the heart, and whereby he keeps the heart clean, and feels the laws of God daily writing there by the finger of God's Spirit, and feels the power and ſenſe of the Spirit to teach and cauſe obedience; ſo that the yoke, which is hard to the tranſgreſſing nature, (alienated from the life and power) is eaſy (and as I may ſay natural) to him that is born of this nature. For being dead with Chriſt, and riſen with Chriſt, and changed into the nature of Chriſt, by the principle which is of him, through the power and Spirit of Chriſt, which worketh therein;

in; he can ſay as Chriſt did, when the Lord calls him to any thing; Lo, I come; it is my meat and drink, yea, my great delight, to do thy will, O God! yea, thy law is written in the midſt of my bowels!

6. Among thoſe who are gathered into this principle, and abide in the ſenſe, light, and life of this principle, there is great love and unity. They are of one mind, of one heart, of one ſoul, of one ſpirit, of one life, gathered into one demonſtration of truth; and there is no jarring, no doubting, no diſſenting, &c. All this is out, in the world, in the earthly wiſdom, in the earthly profeſſions and walkings; but it is excluded the principle of truth, and them that are gathered into and abide therein.

7. That all that are not gathered into, nor walk nor live in this principle, they are yet in the darkneſs and error from the pure power of God, and ſtand and walk in ſlippery places; and though their way may ſeem very right, and their eſtate and condition ſure (as to God-wards) in their own eyes and judgment, yet it is not really ſo; but they are but in a dream concerning the truth, not in the truth itſelf; which (how ſtrange ſoever it may ſeem to them at preſent to be affirmed concerning them) yet they ſhall certainly feel it to be ſo, when the Lord by his powerful voice and bright appearance of his Spirit awaketh them. For many things go for truth now with men in the dark, which will vaniſh like ſmoke before the light of the day; and then that only which is truth indeed ſhall have the glory and praiſe of being accounted ſo; and then what will become of thoſe who have miſtook about truth, and are not clothed with the pure wedding-garment, (the ſpotleſs life and righteouſneſs of the Son) but only with that which they have accounted ſo?

8. That to thoſe that ſee in the light of this principle, the mountain of the Lord's houſe is diſcovered; and thoſe that abide and grow up therein, they know and experience it eſtabliſhed above all mountains, and exalted above all hills; all earthly knowledge, earthly

gions, earthly ways, earthly worſhips, earthly ſpirits and minds, &c. in their greateſt exaltations and glory, being far beneath it. And here the feaſt of fat things, and wines on the lees well refined, even the fruit of the vine which gladdeth and refreſheth the very heart of God, is fed on and partaken of by thoſe that dwell here. For the Father, and the Son, and the Spirit is here revealed, in the holy houſe and tabernacles which are built here; and here they make their feaſt, bringing forth the riches of their nature, ſpirit, and precious life, on which they feed with the ſoul, and give unto the ſoul favour and ability to feed with them; in which food there is the life, ſtrength, righteouſneſs, and joy of the kingdom given forth and received.

9. That in the heart which diſcovers iniquity, reproveth it, witneſſeth againſt it, and ſtriveth with the mind to turn it from it, and to wait for life and power from on high, that is this very principle. In that is the divine nature, even the nature of God's Spirit, which was always againſt ſin, and ever will ſo be, and in all its appearances teſtifieth againſt it, and in love to the creature ſtriveth with the creature to convince it of that in it which is contrary to God, and to draw it to that ſtrength and divine virtue which ſtoppeth it, beateth it back, and worketh it out of the mind and nature of the creature, as it can get entrance, and is hearkened and ſubjected to. For there is no ſalvation, but by the croſs and yoke of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; for in that is the power to crucify the affections and luſts, which lead into ſin and death, and will not ceaſe to tempt and lead aſide, till the ſoul be gathered into unity with that, and become ſubject to that which is contrary to them. So that this is the main thing in religion, even to know Chriſt revealed in the ſoul as a ſtandard againſt corruption, and to be gathered under his banner, which is the croſs, or that living principle in the heart which reſiſteth the corrupt principle; and he that is gathered hither, and continueth faith-

faithfully fighting here, ſhall receive mercy, help, and ſtrength from on high, in every time of need.

10. That the true and certain way of knowledge of the things of God, is in the faith and obedience of this principle. It is not by reaſoning and conſidering things in the mind (after the manner of men) that a man comes to know ſpiritual things; but they are ſpiritually revealed by God, after a ſpiritual manner, to the believer, to the obeyer; and they are revealed to him in his believing, in his obeying, in his waiting, in his holy fearing, in his diſtruſting of himſelf, and feeling his own inſufficiency, either to attain them or retain them, but as the Lord God makes them manifeſt in him, and preſerves him in the ſenſe of them. "He "that doth my will, ſhall know of my doctrine," ſaith Chriſt. This is the way. Wouldſt thou know what God requires of thee, what this or that is which appears in this or that ſort as truth, whether it be ſo or no? Mind this principle in thee, mind the pure, the holy light, inward touches and leadings of this pure divine principle; that will make manifeſt to thee whatever is fit for thee in thy preſent ſtate to know; and thou art not to deſire more, but as a child to reſt contented with that portion of knowledge and ſtrength, which the wiſe and tender Father judgeth fit for thee; and as thy ſtate groweth capable of more, he will not fail to adminiſter to thee. And what he giveth thee is good, ſeaſonable, and proper for thee, which thou mayeſt ſafely feed upon and enjoy in the ſenſe and fear of him. But if thou preſs after what he would not as yet have thee know, thou entereſt into the will and wiſdom of the fleſh; and there are the diſputes, diſcontents, murmurings, and ill tempers and diſpoſitions of the mind, which there will encreaſe and grow upon thee to thy hurt.

11. That the mind that is gathered here, will find great oppoſition, both within and without; inſomuch as he ſhall not eaſily paſs from out of the kingdom of darkneſs, into the kingdom of the dear Son, but through many trials, temptations, oppoſitions, and

dangers many ways, for turning the back on the kingdom of darkneſs, by joining to the principle of life, in hearkening and ſubjecting to the light thereof; hereupon the powers of darkneſs both within and without beſtir themſelves to hinder the ſoul's progreſs, and to bring it back again into ſubjection under the will and wiſdom of the fleſh.

Oh! how doth the will and wiſdom ſtrive within in a man's own boſom! What riſings of the impure are felt againſt the pure! What ſecret and ſubtil reaſonings to enſnare and entangle the mind! and if they cannot draw the ſoul back from the Lord and the living path, then they ſtrive to vex, afflict, and torment it! There is none knows what is felt inwardly by the followers of the Lamb, but thoſe that travel with him in the living path; they are often ſenſible of that they meet with in their travels, and how it is to abide in the path of ſalvation, inſomuch as they underſtand the truth of that ſaying, "If the righteous "ſcarcely be ſaved." It is ſcarcely indeed! ſo ſubtil, ſo ſtrong, ſuch a many holds, ſo many ſtratagems hath the ſubtil, twining, crooked, piercing leviathan, to enſnare, perplex, over-run, and entangle them with. And then outwardly, the ſame fleſh, the ſame earthly ſpirit and wiſdom, the ſame crooked helliſh will, is ſtriving in men without alſo, to bear down and ſubject the pure principle in them who are born of God, to their devices and inſtitutions, decrees, ways, cuſtoms, &c. which are of the will and wiſdom of the fleſh. So that, as the apoſtle ſaid, *through much tribulation is the entrance of the ſoul into the heavenly kingdom*; and there is no avoiding the many tribulations, but by turning aſide out of the way (which though thereby the fleſh get eaſe for a time, it will be to the greater loſs and ſorrow in the end). For the ſpirit of the world, the wiſdom of the world, the nature, religion, worſhip, and whole courſe of the world, is contrary to the way of the pure wiſdom and Spirit of God, and uſeth it as its enemy, wherever it findeth it; and they that will not bow to the ſpirit, wiſdom, and way

way of the world, muſt feel the force of its beaſtly claws. For is it not a beaſtly thing (even far beneath the nature of a man) to perſecute that which is good; to hurt, reproach, and purſue the innocent life of the Lamb? And yet this is that which the ſpirit of the world (which is not of God, but wiſe, and ſeemingly juſt and righteous in another wiſdom, nature, and principle) always hath done, ſtill doth, and will do to the end.

12. That there is a glorious crown prepared for all thoſe, who are gathered to the Lamb in this principle, and abide with him faithful therein to the end, hearing his voice, believing the demonſtration of his Spirit, obeying him in all his motions and requirings, undergoing every yoke, (which is appointed by him to yoke down the fleſhly nature and mind) and taking up every croſs of every kind in meekneſs, patience, and fear. And there is not only a crown laid up for them at laſt, but the power of the Lord God is nigh unto them to work all in them, to bear them up through and over all, and to keep them to and in that principle, whereby and whereinto his tender mercy and powerful arm gathered them. For as the power of the Lord began the work (for there could never any heart be gathered from under the power of darkneſs to the light which leads out of it, but by the power of the Lord; for the powers of darkneſs ſtand between, and would hold and keep their own, did not a greater power appear and put forth itſelf for the ſoul againſt them); I ſay, as the power of the Lord began the work, ſo the ſame power alone is able to go on with it and perfect it; and it will go on with it and perfect it upon the ſame terms it began, and no other. How were the terms at firſt, but on a giving up of the ſoul in the faith to the Lord, in the ſenſe of his love and goodneſs and mercy, touching, and drawing, and making willing? And how is the ſtanding, but in the ſame giving up ſtill; in abiding with the Lord, in hearkening to the voice of the Lord, in waiting for the wiſdom and counſel of the Lord? But

if

if any man draw back from this, if he despise the Spirit and his motions and counsels, and hearken to the voice of a contrary spirit, believing and following it, like the angels that fell, he departeth from his place and habitation, which he had in the drawings, life, and power of God, and is not to God what he was before, nor is God to him what he was before; but the Lord, who loved him before, and delighted in him to do him good, hath now no pleasure in him, he being turned from that which the Lord loveth, and in which he hath determined and appointed to choose, love, and own the children of men; who, as they are gathered thither, are his children; as they that are gathered from thence, into a contrary principle, are the children of the wicked one.

And now what is of man in all this? Where is the man that can boast before the Lord, who is thus saved? He hath all from a principle; yea, he is gathered into, preserved in, and abideth in this principle by the power, goodness, and mercy of the Lord. The power begins the work in him, the power accompanies him; the power carries him through, or he falls and miscarries. There is no man can stand any longer here, than he submits to and is upheld by the power, nor act nor suffer, but as the power acts in him and helps him to suffer. Let the man that boasteth, bring forth somewhat of his own, if he can, here. Is the will at any time his own? Doth not he that is spiritual, and in the true sense, always find God to work in him to will, whenever he willeth rightly and holily? And if he cannot will of himself, can he do any thing of himself? Can he believe of himself, pray of himself, wait of himself, resist enemies and temptations of himself; nay, so much as give a look to the Lord at any time of himself? Indeed in the grace of the Lord, and principle of his life, there is sufficiency: and therein he that is joined to the Lord, and become one Spirit with him, what can he not do here? but that is, as he is new-made in Christ, and as Christ ariseth,

ariſeth, lives, and acts in him: which he that is in the true ſenſe and feeling will ſtill acknowledge, not only in his words to men, but in his heart and ſpirit before the Lord.

Some further Directions to CHRIST, the Principle and Fountain of Life, by Way of Queſtion and Anſwer.

Queſt 1. *WHAT is Chriſt?*

Anſ. He is the word of eternal life, who is appointed of the Father to give life, and who giveth life to them that receive him, and obey his goſpel. He is the Son of God, the wiſdom of God, the power of God, the righteouſneſs of God, the Saviour and ſalvation of God. The peace, the reſt, the joy, the life of the ſoul. The King, the Prieſt, the Prophet, the Shepherd of the ſheep. The way, the truth, the door, the vine, the olive-tree, into which the living are gathered and engrafted. And he is alſo an hammer, an axe, a ſword, a fire to the corrupt tree and fruit.

Queſt. 2. *How is Chriſt known, received, and obeyed?*

Anſ. As a ſeed; as the ſeed of life, as the ſeed of the kingdom, as a leaven, as ſalt; as a little ſmall thing, riſing up in the heart againſt all that is great and mighty. As a branch out of a dry ground; as a little child to lead, which all the wiſdom of man and fleſh cannot but deſpiſe; and therefore that muſt firſt be brought down in ſome meaſure in the heart, before Chriſt can be owned in the heart, and ſubjected to.

Queſt. 3. *How is the ſeed received?*

Anſ. By feeling its virtues, manifeſtations, and operations in the heart, and ſubjecting thereto.

Queſt. 4. *What are its virtues, manifeſtations, and operations?*

Anſ.

Anſ. They are all living, and have all living and powerful effects upon the heart, as they are let in. They are all againſt darkneſs, ſin, and death; tending to diſcover it, to turn the mind from it, to lead out of the captivity, power, and reach of it; and they are alſo all for God, tending to prepare the heart for him, and to bring it into union and covenant with him.

Queſt. 5. *What is the firſt operation of the ſeed to the ſoul, wherein it is to be waited for, and cloſed with, that the ſoul may come into the farther ſenſe and feeling of it?*

Anſ. It is according to the ſtate of the ſoul; which being in darkneſs, ſin, and death, it appears as a light to diſcover the darkneſs, ſin, and death, and to lead out of it to the redeeming power. And then, to them that thus receive it, and wait upon it in the fear and humility which it gives and begets, it appears as life, quickening the ſoul, and as power, enabling it in ſome meaſure to live to God, and to walk with him in the way to the kingdom.

Queſt. 6. *How comes this way to be hid from ſome that deſire after the Lord, and to know his truth as it is in Jeſus?*

Anſ. From the ſubtilty of the enemy, who blinds the eye which alone can ſee, and ſtops the ear which alone can hear, and hardens the heart which alone can underſtand; and hath devices, ſnares, and baits, and falſe reaſonings from ſcriptures, and from experiences, which any one that hearkens unto, and is entangled and enſnared in, is his captive, and cannot be at liberty to ſee, or know, or embrace the truth as it is; but his heart is deceived about it, and filled with prejudices againſt it. *(Therefore ſuch ſhould wait for the true circumciſion, that they might hearken to the Lord, come out of the enemy's ſnares and ſubtil devices, and live)* as Iſa. lv. 1, 2, 3.

Queſt. 7. *But may not theſe be ſaved notwithſtanding?*

Anſ. There is no ſalvation but in and by Chriſt Jeſus; and the ſalvation is not to them that received a bare notion of him under the law, or another empty notion

notion under the profeſſion of the goſpel; but only to them that receive him as he was promiſed, as the holy ſeed: for in that alone is the redemption, freedom from ſin, and power of life felt, and no where elſe. So that he that hath not this knowledge of him, hath not the true knowledge; nor he that doth not ſo believe in him, doth not rightly believe; nor he that doth not ſo hope in him, doth not rightly hope: and without the true knowledge, the right faith and hope, how can any man be ſaved?

Therefore awake! awake! O weary, thirſty ſouls! come to the ſpring of life; come to the living waters. Become little, that ye may learn of Chriſt; wait to have your eyes anointed, that ye may ſee him, and your hearts opened, that ye may know and receive him. Oh! wait for the manifeſtation of this ſeed in you, be abaſed before him, join to him, receive his checks, receive mourning and repentance from him; wait for the light and faith that he gives, and the power that iſſues from his throne, and ye ſhall find him the bruiſer of the ſerpent's head, (which none elſe is able to do) and the breaker of the bond of iniquity, which keeps down the juſt, and ſets the unjuſt at liberty, till he diſſolve it. And this is ſufficient to manifeſt againſt all the diſputes of the mind, that this is he, and no other, by his doing that which none elſe can do. This demonſtration he gave to the *Jews in the fleſh*, in his appearance in fleſh; and this demonſtration he giveth now to the *Jews in ſpirit*, in his appearance in Spirit, whereby he ſatisfieth their hearts, and putteth them out of doubt that it is he. And we muſt profeſs to the world (as our hearts are drawn and guided by the Lord, to give forth the teſtimony we have received of him) that we look not, yea, we cannot look, for another. Whom ſhould we look for beſides the Lamb, beſides the Word which was in the beginning, beſides him who is one with the Father, and hath the eternal life, wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and power of the Father, and manifeſteth it in us? We look indeed for more of the ſame, and the more

more univerſal and powerful breaking of it forth; but another thing, another Chriſt, another life, Spirit, power, &c. we cannot look for. And this we further teſtify, that whoever receives this teſtimony in the truth and uprightneſs of his heart, waiting on that which diſcovers ſin to him, and in ſimplicity joining and giving up thereto, and walking with him in forſaking the evil and cleaving to the good, in the faith of him and of his power, he ſhall witneſs the ſame thing with us; and all the reaſonings, imaginations, and ſtrong-holds of his mind ſhall be battered down, and come to nothing, before the virtue, power, and life of him who thus is pleaſed to appear and manifeſt himſelf after the apoſtaſy, even as he did before, even in an inward principle, an inward ſeed, an inward light, an inward life, an inward word, an inward power. And friends and people mark in your minds, and learn to put a right difference between that which ſtumbles you, and that which draws and convinces you. What makes any of you own truth at any time? Is it not an inward, lively, powerful touch and demonſtration of God's Spirit? What makes you afterwards doubt and queſtion? Is it not another thing, of a different nature from this? Is it not a ſubtil reaſoning, whereby the enemy twines into your ſpirits, and begets firſt a doubt concerning, then a prejudice, and at laſt a great ſtrength againſt that, which before ye had ſome ſenſe of, and ſome unity with, in the teachings and quickenings of the Spirit of the Lord? And what ſpirit is it in you, that thus worketh in your minds? And whither doth he lead you by theſe workings and ſubtil reaſonings? Oh! that ye might ſee, oh! that ye might feel, the ſnare, and know with us the preſerver therefrom! for we have met with much of this; and had we not been helped by the Lord, and given up to him, we had been entangled to this very day, as ye are. And he that hath helped us, waits to be gracious to you; and oh! that you would not reject his help, that he might deliver you alſo! that ye alſo might bleſs his name, in feeling the benefit

nefit and joy of his preſervation. And this is written in true bowels and tender yearning love, that ye might be a little ſtirred up to wait to know the Father's houſe, and might feed on the bread which abounds therein, and drink of the water which makes freſh and living to God, and be clothed with the raiment which the maſter of the family gives to his ſpouſe, children, and ſervants.

The End of CHRIST's Manifeſtation, his Salvation, and whom he ſaves.

CHRIST came (and is manifeſt in the hearts of thoſe that receive him) to deſtroy the works of the devil, and to ſet the ſoul free from ſin; and whom he maketh free, are free indeed. Is the liberty which the Son giveth inferior in this life, in its kind, to the captivity and bondage of the enemy in its kind? Which of them is ſtronger; the enemy to enthral, or the Lord Jeſus Chriſt to ſet free from his thraldom? Yes, the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the Captain of our ſalvation, the mighty Saviour (who is more able to ſave than the enemy to deſtroy) delivereth his Iſrael out of the hands of their enemies, and ſo mightily and powerfully delivereth them, that they are able (in the power of his might) to ſerve him, without fear of them any more, in holineſs and righteouſneſs before him all the days of their life.

It is true, there is a ſtate of darkneſs, ſin, and death, wherein Satan reigns; and there is a ſtate of weakneſs, wherein Satan much prevails, if the watch be not ſtrictly kept to him, who is the everlaſting ſtrength; and there is a ſtate of ſighing and groaning under the body of ſin and death, and crying out who ſhall deliver from it! But there is alſo a ſtate of growth in the life, and of victory (through the life) over that which captived and cauſed to cry out. There is

is a treading down of Satan under the feet by the God of peace, inſomuch as not only the elders, but the very young men in Chriſt, overcome and triumph over him, feeling the entrance miniſtered to them abundantly into the everlaſting kingdom, into which no unclean thing can enter. Oh! wonderful is the travel to the holy reſt of the pure life! Happy are they that meet with the true leader, and faithfully follow him, till they have travelled through and overcome all that ſtands in their way! For to them, and to them alone, is the promiſe of the poſſeſſion of the everlaſting inheritance; and ſuch find and feel the Lord to be their God indeed, and themſelves to be his children, (brought forth in his holy life and nature) which to feel in truth and certain knowledge is more than tongue can utter.

Chriſt ſaves only thoſe that come unto him, and believe in him, and ſo are born of his Spirit, and by the faith, and through the ſtrength and virtue of his Spirit, overcome the wicked-one, his works, ſnares, and temptations in their hearts. And theſe feel in themſelves the root of his life, the holy ſeed of his kingdom ſpringing up in them, into which they are ingrafted, and become one with him, and ſo bringing forth the holy fruit, the living grapes, the new and righteous converſation, wherein the life of God ſhines, and is glorified. Now it is not knowing, or believing, or receiving any thing into the old underſtanding that avails with God, or the reformation which is there wrought; but the new creature alone, created of God in Jeſus Chriſt. This is born of God, this lives in him, this is clothed with him. This puts off the old man, with his deeds, and puts on the newneſs of the nature and Spirit of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; ſo that this man is as really in Chriſt, in the Spirit, in the new Adam, found in him, formed in him, covered with him, as the firſt man, or nature, is in the old Adam. Therefore this is the main thing in religion, to mind the ſeed of the kingdom, the leaven of the kingdom, its growth in the mind, ſoul, and ſpirit,

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and the mind's, ſoul's, and ſpirit's gathering into, and growth in it. And here is faith, the true faith, the true love, the true hope, the true meekneſs and patience, the true juſtification and ſanctification felt, and not elſewhere; but thoſe that are out of this, out of Chriſt the ſeed, out of Chriſt the Word, out of Chriſt the wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and power of the Father, are only in a dream concerning theſe things, but know not the truth and real nature of them, as they are felt in Jeſus, by thoſe who are truly ingrafted in him, and livingly grow up in him.

THREE QUESTIONS ANSWERED, concerning JUSTIFICATION.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is juſtifying, or juſtification with God?*

Anſ. It is God's owning the ſtate, works, or actions of a creature, either inwardly in his own mind, or manifeſtly to them. This is God's juſtifying of them, or his juſtification; his diſowning or diſallowing them, is his condemnation. As for inſtance: God's owning Adam in the upright eſtate of his innocency, wherein God created him, and any thing he did in that ſtate and ſpirit, was his juſtifying of him and his works. God's diſowning and diſallowing his hearkening to his wife and the ſerpent, and his eating the forbidden fruit upon their temptation, was his condemnation thereof.

Queſt. 2. *What is it God juſtifies, and what is it he condemns?*

Anſ. That which God juſtifieth is the Spirit of his Son, the life of his Son, the nature of his Son, brought forth in any creature, the faith which is in him; and ſo the creature, as it is in the obedience which is of him, and the works that are wrought in him. But the

fallen eſtate of man from him, and all that is done by man out of him, God condemns.

Queſt. 3. *How is juſtification received, kept, and grown up in; and what is the preſervation out of condemnation?*

Anſ. Juſtification is only received by receiving him, who is the righteouſneſs and juſtification, and only kept by abiding in him, and only increaſed by growing up in him. For as every one that is found in him is juſtified; ſo he that hath more of him, more of his life, more of his faith, more of his nature, more of his Spirit, more of the pure obedience, more of the garment of righteouſneſs and ſalvation drawn over him, he is more juſtified. For there are degrees of juſtification, as the ſoul that is really in the thing, and is acquainted with the true nature and diſpenſation of it from God, feels and knows. A father is more or leſs pleaſed with his children, yea, with the ſame child ſometimes; which is a true figure to man who is come under God's teachings. And the preſervation out of condemnation is, by being preſerved out of that which God condemns: for no man upon the earth, that hath the true ſenſe and feeling, ſhall ever find the Holy and Juſt One juſtifying him in his ſins; but as the heart is turned from them, and by the power of life kept out of them. He that will be kept in the juſtification, muſt be kept out of that which the juſtification is not to: for there he is not juſtified; but in his being drawn again out of it, and turning again from it, his juſtification in the tender mercy of the Lord is renewed. Juſtification under the law was according to that covenant. He that walks with God in that covenant, he that walks in and after the Spirit of Chriſt, he is therein juſtified; but he that walks after the fleſh, and doth any thing that is fleſhly, that is not juſtified with God, nor he in that; but in the faith which cleanſeth and giveth victory over it, in that is the juſtification from it, and the pure heavenly peace with the Lord God of life witneſſed.

He that is in Chriſt, and receiveth his knowledge from Chriſt, and is kept in the pure fear and ſenſe of him,

him, he underſtandeth the truth of theſe things; but he that is erred in ſpirit, and holds but up a literal knowledge (though from, or at leaſt accompanied with, ſome remembrance of former feelings and experiences) he errs about theſe things alſo, and deceit and a lie hath prevailed over him, as he will find, when the Lord confounds his wiſdom and preſent apprehenſions of things, by awakening his witneſs in him. For religion, the true religion, is a myſtery, life is a myſtery, Chriſt is a myſtery, the Spirit is a myſtery, faith is a myſtery, obedience (the *pure obedience)* is a myſtery, worſhip (the *ſpiritual worſhip* in and according to the new covenant) is a myſtery, hid from the eyes of all the wiſe ſearchers of the world; but revealed to the leaſt babe that is of God, and abideth in the quickened life of his Son. But many that are out of the myſtery of truth, are in the myſtery of deceit, and have a knowledge or profeſſion concerning Chriſt, his Spirit, faith, obedience, the ſpiritual worſhip, &c. in that myſtery of deceit, which they for the preſent account the true, and by it venture to judge, diſallow, and condemn the truth itſelf; but that is not at all to the hurt of the truth, or ſuch as are in it; but rather to their own hurt and great danger. For the ſparks which man kindles will never light him to God; the garments of man's righteouſneſs (either according to his apprehenſions of the letter of the law, or letter of the goſpel) will never clothe him; but for all that, he muſt lie down in ſhame and ſorrow, when the truth of God appears in his conſcience, and all his ſhadows and deceits flee away.

Therefore hearken to the teſtimony from theſe whom the Lord hath awakened, whom the Lord hath quickened, whom the Lord hath led out of the darkneſs of the night, into the light and brightneſs of the day; who have ſeen Jeſus, and teſtify what they have ſeen, heard, felt, and handled of that eternal Word, which was from the beginning, which appeared in fleſh, and afterwards in Spirit, before the apoſtaſy, and hath

again appeared (ſince the apoſtaſy) as a ſhepherd, as a gatherer, as a ſeeker-out and preſerver of his wandering ſheep, who were driven from him in the cloudy and dark day. And if ye would hearken aright, breathe to the Lord, in that which deſires and longs after him, that he would circumciſe the heart, and open the right ear in you, that the ear may hear his witneſs in you, that ſo ye may indeed know the voice of the Shepherd, and in true underſtanding, ſenſe, and conſtant experience, bear witneſs to that true teſtimony which Chriſt ſpake in the days of his fleſh: "My ſheep hear my voice, and follow me; but "a ſtranger they will not follow: for they know not "the voice of ſtrangers."

Of the pure, conſtant, eternal, unchangeable Nature of GOD's Truth.

TRUTH is of God, and was with God, and in God, before any thing elſe had a being. Truth was before error or deceit: for it was from the truth that the error was, and it was about truth that the deceit was. There was ſomewhat which erred from truth, and brought in deceit into the world, and hath propagated deceit in the world; but truth remains the ſame that it was, keeping its pure, eternal, unchangeable nature; and is not, nor ever was, nor ever can be, defiled or tainted with any error or deceit; but teſtifieth againſt it, reproveth it, and condemneth for it, draweth out of it, and delivereth from its bands and captivity, all thoſe that hearken and cleave to it, in the faith which is of its nature and begetting.

The Father, the fountain of truth, is the ſame. The Son, his expreſs image, (whom he fills with himſelf, and in whom he appears) is the ſame. The Spirit, the anointing, who is *truth*, and no *lie)* is ſtill the

the ſame. The principle or ſeed of truth is ſtill the ſame. The doctrine and way of truth is ſtill the ſame; for it was the ſame truth which was preached in ſhadows under the law, the ſubſtance whereof appears, and is witneſſed in the goſpel: and it was the ſame before the great apoſtaſy, in the latter days from it, and all the time of the apoſtaſy, and again after the apoſtaſy. It hath the ſame nature ſtill, the ſame properties, the ſame operations and effects, and gives forth the ſame teſtimony in the ears and hearts of all that are open to it. Indeed the minds of men, and the ſtates of men, may often change in relation to truth; but truth itſelf changeth not, but is equal, fair, and juſt to all men upon the earth, in all ages and generations, always condemning that which is unjuſt, erroneous, and deceitful, and always juſtifying what is pure, holy, and righteous.

Now is not this a pearl? Nay, is not this the pearl indeed, the precious pearl of price? Who would not buy it? Who would not ſell all for it? Who would not dig in the field, where this treaſure is hid, until he find it? The field is near thee, O man! which thou art to purchaſe and dig in, and muſt feel torn up by the plough of God in ſome meaſure before this pearl or treaſure appear to thee; and thou muſt take up and bear the yoke and croſs of Chriſt, until all be bowed down and crucified in thee which is contrary to its nature, before it be poliſhed in thee, and thou come to behold and enjoy its riches and everlaſting fulneſs. Oh! happy are they that are begotten and born of it! happy are they that know its voice, and give up to it, to be gathered and redeemed by it, out of all deceits, out of all errors, out of all that entangles and enſnares the ſoul in ſin, miſery, and utter perdition; for deſtruction and miſery everlaſting is out of it, and life and ſalvation is alone to be found in it.

There is a witneſs in every heart, which knows theſe things, and will teſtify it to their faces, when the light of God is opened in them, and its tongue ſpeaks

therein to them. Oh! happy they that wait for, know, hear, and ſubject to the heavenly voice, while the day of their viſitation and reclaiming laſteth, wherein they may travel from ſin to holineſs, from death to life, by its help and guidance! Oh! why ſhould man periſh? Why ſhould man hearken to that which hates him, and ſeeks his deſtruction, and ſtop his ear againſt that which loves him, and warns him of his danger in the dearneſs of love, and in tenderneſs of bowels towards him?

A QUES-

A

QUESTION

TO THE

PROFESSORS OF CHRISTIANITY,

WHETHER

They have the true, living, powerful, saving Knowledge of CHRIST, or no?

WITH

Some QUERIES concerning CHRIST, and his APPEARANCES; his taking upon him our Flesh; as also concerning his Flesh and Blood, and our being formed thereof, and feeding thereon.

AND

An Incitation to Professors seriously to consider, whether they or we fail in the true Acknowledgment and Owning of the CHRIST which died at Jerusalem.

LIKEWISE

Some Propositions and Considerations concerning the Nature of Church-Worships and Ordinances since the Death of the Apostles, for the Sake of the Simplicity, which hath been long held captive therein.

WITH

The Sounding of Bowels towards thee, O ENGLAND!

Also a faithful Guidance to the Principle and Path of TRUTH.

WITH

Some sensible experimental QUESTIONS and ANSWERS, from the Tenth Chapter of JOHN.

By ISAAC PENINGTON,

Prisoner in AYLESBURY, who (by the Counsel of the LORD) hath chosen rather to suffer Affliction with the despised People of GOD, than to enjoy the Pleasures of Sin for a Season.

THE PREFACE.

"THIS is life eternal, that they might know "thee, the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt "whom thou haſt ſent." Whom did the Father ſend? Did he not ſend the Son of his love? From whence did he ſend him? Did he not ſend him out of his own boſom? Whither did he ſend him? Did he not ſend him into the world, to take upon him a body, and glorify the name of the Father, doing his will therein? He laid down his glory, ſtripping himſelf of the form of God, and appearing in habit as a man, in their raiment, with their garment upon him; in which, as a ſervant, the ſeed (the heir of all) ſerved the Father. And now his work being as good as done, he looks back at the glory which he had laid down for the Father's ſake, looking up to the Father for the reſtoring of it to him again. "I have glorified thee on "the earth," ſaith he, "I have finiſhed the work "which thou gaveſt me to do. And now, O Father, "glorify thou me with thine own ſelf, with the glory "which I had with thee before the world was," John xvii. 4, 5.

Now having ſought and travelled (from my childhood) after the true knowledge of God, and of his Chriſt; and having been ſatisfied with nothing elſe that ever I could meet with, and having at length (through the tender mercy of the Lord, and guidance of his Spirit) met with this, and been ſatisfied therewith, finding it to be the eternal life, the true food, the living power, the pure reſt, the joy and ſalvation of my ſoul, I cannot but teſtify it to thoſe that lay out

out their money for that which is not bread, and their labour for that which ſatisfieth not.

We (ſome of us, at leaſt) laid out as much of our money as others, who now deſpiſe us, have done; and as much of our labour; and (I may ſpeak it in the fear of the Lord, and in true ſenſe, without boaſting) ſome of us had as much of that which they feed on, and call bread, as they have now. Yet when the Lord brought us to the true balance, we found it not to be bread, nor able to give the ſoul true ſatisfaction. The bread was not that which we then called bread, but that which we overlooked, and wiſt not what it was. But the eternal life which was hid with the Father, and is manifeſted in the Son, and made known to the ſoul, (as the Son is manifeſted to it, and revealed in it) that is bread indeed, that is meat which periſheth not, but will endure when all literal and outward knowledge of God and Chriſt fails, and will fall ſhort of ſatisfying that hunger of the ſoul, which is after the ſubſtance itſelf.

Now to draw mens minds to a ſenſe of truth, to a ſenſe of that which is the thing, that they might know the bread indeed, that they might know the living waters, come to them, and drink thereof, and find Chriſt in them a well of water ſpringing up to eternal life; therefore was it in my heart to give forth this queſtion, and the enſuing queries; which he that rightly anſwers, muſt know the thing; and he that doth not rightly know the thing, by his inability to anſwer, may find that he doth not, and ſo may wait upon God that he may receive the knowledge of it, and come to it for the eternal life which it freely giveth.

The Jews were puzzled with a literal knowledge of the law and prophets, and about the Meſſiah to come, according to their underſtanding of the prophecies concerning him, and ſo were kept from the true knowledge thereby. Moſt ſorts of thoſe that now profeſs Chriſt, are puzzled about a knowledge concerning the outward body, fleſh, and blood of Chriſt, according

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as they apprehend the ſcriptures to ſpeak; and ſo the the veil is over their hearts likewiſe, and they cannot ſee the eternal life and ſubſtance, no more than the Jews, but by an outward literal knowledge are kept back from the thing, as the Jews were. Now the breathing of my heart to the Lord is, To take away the veil of all hearts that ſincerely deſire after truth, and to open the true eye in them, that they may ſee the deſire and beloved of their ſouls, and may be led by him into the true travel, out of ſelf, towards the kingdom; yea, into the very land of the living, where the food of life is fed upon, where the living ſprings flow, where are vineyards which we planted not, and dwelling-places which we built not, where the fruit of the vine of God's planting (the wine of the kingdom) is drunk of, even new in the kingdom, with the Father and Son in the Spirit, who are One and All there.

The Lord give a ſenſe and underſtanding, that the ear of the needy, the afflicted in ſpirit, the mourners, the captives, the bowed down may hear, and may be drawn to touch that which hath the virtue in it, and which effectually redeemeth thoſe that wait upon it, from all that boweth down and oppreſſeth.

A QUES-

A

QUESTION

TO THE

PROFESSORS of CHRISTIANITY.

THE Queſtion is not, whether they know what is ſaid of Chriſt in the ſcriptures; but whether they know it *ſavingly, truly, livingly, powerfully?* Yea, they may know what is ſaid of him, and yet not know him of whom thoſe things are ſaid. As it was with the Scribes and Phariſees; they knew what was ſaid of Chriſt in the law and prophets; but they knew not himſelf, when he appeared in that body of fleſh. So men may now know what the apoſtles and the evangeliſts have ſaid concerning his appearance in a body of fleſh, (concerning his birth, circumciſion, baptiſm, preaching, doctrine, miracles, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, interceſſion, &c.) and yet not know him of whom theſe things are ſaid. Yea, they may know what is ſaid concerning the Word which was from the beginning, and yet not know the word, the power, the life itſelf.

Since the prevailing of the apoſtles teſtimony, the way of the enemy hath not been directly to deny Chriſt, but to bring men into ſuch a knowledge of Chriſt, as ſaves not. And as the enemy did own Chriſt, when he appeared in that body of fleſh, ſaying,

ing, "I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of "God;" ſo he hath found it for his advantage, almoſt ever ſince, to own that appearance of his. So that this he doth not oppoſe, nor mens knowledge and underſtanding of ſcriptures, ſo as to confirm them in this. But the ſaving knowledge, the true knowledge, the living knowledge, the powerful knowledge of truth, that he always oppoſeth; for that alone overturns and deſtroys his kingdom in man, and brings man from out of his reach.

Now there is a vaſt difference between knowing the relations concerning a thing, and knowing the thing related of. And there is alſo a great deal of difference between believing the relations concerning a thing, and believing in the thing which is related of.

Spiritual things cannot be ſavingly known, but in union with them, in the receiving of them. A man can never really know the Spirit of God, by all that can be ſaid concerning it, but he muſt firſt feel ſomewhat of it, whereby he may truly know it. So the peace, the joy, the life, the power, they paſs the underſtanding; and a man can never rightly know them by reading, or comprehending ever ſo much concerning them; but by coming out of himſelf, and travelling thither where they are given and made manifeſt, he may come into acquaintance with them. And if the peace which Chriſt gives, the joy, the life, the power, cannot be thus known by literal deſcriptions; how can he, who is the fulneſs of all, the fountain of them all, the treaſury of all perfection, in whom are hid all the riches and treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge; how can he be known by outward and literal deſcriptions?

Now we have travelled through theſe things. We knew formerly what ye know now; and we alſo know now, what God hath given us further; and what our former knowledge was, and what our preſent knowledge is. And this is it which gives us ſatisfaction.

Our knowledge is in a principle, wherein we receive our capacity of knowing, and wherein the Father (from

(from whom the principle came) teacheth us. And this is his way of teaching us; by making us one with the thing he teacheth. Thus we learn Chriſt, by being born of him, by putting him on. Thus we know his righteouſneſs, his life, his wiſdom, his power, by receiving a proportion of them, which giveth an ability to diſcern and acknowledge the fulneſs. And in this we receive the underſtanding of the ſcriptures, and know the ſeed of the woman, (which bruiſeth the ſerpent's head) by receiving the ſeed, by feeling its growth in us, and its power over the enemy. Then we know the thing; likewiſe we know the woman that brings forth this ſeed after the Spirit, which is the Jeruſalem above; and we know alſo, and ſingly acknowledge, the bringing forth of it outwardly after the fleſh. This ſeed we know to be the ſeed of Abraham, the ſeed of David after the fleſh, and the ſeed of God after the power of the endleſs life; and we are taught of God to give the due honour to each; to the ſeed of God in the firſt place, to the ſeed of David in the ſecond place. There was the ſeed that wrought the thing, which ſeed was the life; and the ſeed in which he wrought it, which was formed into a veſſel like ours, but without ſin, in which the pure Lamb appeared in the pure power of life, which kept the veſſel pure; and ſo he (who was to be the firſt fruits) had the honour above all his brethren, being anointed with the oil of gladneſs above his fellows.

But we alſo are born of the ſame ſeed. He is formed in us; we are formed of him; we are as well of his fleſh and blood, as he was of ours. And by being thus formed, and feeling him grow up in us, and receiving an underſtanding from him, and in him, thus we come to know him, and to underſtand the words of ſcripture concerning him. By feeling and knowing the Lamb in our veſſels, we know alſo what was the Lamb in his veſſel.

Thus we know things in the certainty and demonſtration of God's Spirit, even in the light which ſhines from him, and in the life which he begets; and we

ſpeak

ſpeak of things as they are, and as we feel them to be in the true life, which the Spirit of Chriſt hath begotten in us. And we can truly ſay concerning the ſcriptures, That now we believe, not ſo much becauſe of the relation of things concerning Chriſt, which we have found in them; but becauſe we have ſeen and received the thing which the ſcriptures ſpeak of, and find it to be the very thing indeed, the very Chriſt of God, the ſpotleſs one, the living garment of righteouſneſs and ſalvation, wherein God findeth no fault, and in which the ſoul appears without blame before him. And concerning this, can we ſpeak words of its nature, words of its virtue, words of its life, power, and righteouſneſs; which that which is of the fleſh cannot hear, but that which is born of God, naturally owneth and underſtandeth. Why ſo? Becauſe it knoweth the nature of the thing, and receiveth them in the ſavour thereof. Can life deny life? Can the birth of life deny that which ſprings out of the ſame womb? No, no. The children which are born of wiſdom, do juſtify wiſdom in its ſeveral ſproutings forth and appearances; but that which denies it, is a birth after the letter, a birth after the literal and outward knowledge of things, a birth of the comprehending wiſdom; that indeed reproacheth and blaſphemeth the incomprehenſible wiſdom, in its incomprehenſible ways, and would reſtrain life to what they apprehend, or can comprehend by the letter concerning it.

And this may be a great evidence to profeſſors, that they know not indeed Chriſt in his nature, Spirit, life, and power; becauſe they ſpeak not of him as perſons who feel the thing, and ſpeak from the preſent ſenſe of it, and acquaintance with it, but only as perſons that bring forth a notion they have rereceived into their underſtandings. And yet they fail therein alſo; for they ſpeak not of Chriſt according as the ſcriptures hold him forth, compared one with another, but as they have groſsly apprehended concerning him from ſome ſcriptures, as the Jews outward

ward did. For the ſcriptures ſpeak not only of a body, but alſo of him that appeared in the body; nor only of bodily fleſh, blood, and bones, but alſo of ſuch fleſh and bones, whereof Chriſt and his church conſiſt. He is Chriſt (ſay the ſcriptures) who is one with the Father, who came from the Father, in whom the Father was, and who was in the Father; ſo ſaid Jeſus of himſelf (lifting up his eyes to heaven, and praying to the Father of his diſciples, and the children whom the Father had given him) more than once in that ſeventeenth chapter of John. Yea he is Chriſt, whom a man cannot ſee, but he muſt ſee the Father alſo; and whom, whoſoever ſeeth the Father, ſeeth; who was before Abraham was; whom no man could know whence he was, even as no man can know whence the Father is. Chriſt granted the Jews that they knew him, and whence he was as to his body; and yet for all that, he was the Chriſt who was to come, whom no man knew from whence he was. What was that, Chriſt called *me*, ſpeaking to Philip? "Haſt "thou not known me, Philip? Haſt thou not ſeen "me?" What, doſt thou know me after the fleſh, after the body? Doſt thou take that for me? Have I been ſo long with you, and do you know me no better than ſo? The body is from below, the body is like one of yours (only ſanctified by the Father, and preſerved without ſin); but I am the ſame Spirit, life, and being with the Father. We are one ſubſtance, one pure power of life, and we cannot be divided; but he that ſees one, muſt needs ſee both; and he that knows one, muſt needs know both. This is the Lamb of God which John bare witneſs of, which he ſaid was before him, John i. 15. which the body was not.

Now friends, if you have this living ſpiritual knowledge, if ye hold it in him that is true; then own and acknowledge it, (as it is expreſſed in the ſcriptures, and as God hath now brought it forth in his people) that ye may manifeſt yourſelves to that which is of God, that ye are of him. There is an underſtanding and wiſdom of man, and there is a witneſs of God, which

which witneſs gives true judgment. Man (at beſt) judgeth but according as things appear to him from the ſcriptures; but the witneſs judgeth of the things of God in the demonſtration of the Spirit, according as they are felt and known to be in him.

But if ye have not this knowledge, but have long laid out your money and labour for that which is not bread, nor can yield the true ſatisfaction; Oh! come to the waters, and receive that which is given freely, without money and without price! Oh! ſell all for the pearl, for the knowledge which is of life, for the knowledge which is life! "I am the way, the truth, "and the life," ſaith Chriſt; this is life eternal to know. And wait to feel the rock laid as a foundation in you, even the ſeed of God, the life of Chriſt, the Spirit of Chriſt revealed in you, and your ſouls born of it, and built upon it. Oh! that ye could come out of your own underſtandings, that ye might feel and receive the love of my heart, and know the travail of my bowels for you; that ye might be born of the truth, and know and receive it as it is in Jeſus, and as it is felt in the Spirit, and its own pure power.

Now a little further, to remove the ſcruples and prejudices out of the minds of ſuch as ſometimes have been touched with the power of truth, and have had the witneſs of God reached to in their hearts; but afterwards the enemy hath raiſed miſts, and caſt blocks in their way, ſtirring up in them hard thoughts againſt us, as if we denied what the ſcriptures affirm in this thing, and indeed (in effect) that Chriſt which died at Jeruſalem, and ſet up a natural principle within, inſtead thereof:

To remove this out of the minds of the honeſt-hearted, (who in the guidance of God might light on this paper) I ſhall open my heart nakedly herein.

1. We do own that the Word of God (the only begotten of the Father) did take up a body of the fleſh of the virgin Mary, who was of the ſeed of David, according to the ſcriptures, and did the will of

the Father therein, in holy obedience unto him, both in life and death.

2. That he did offer up the flesh and blood of that body (though not only so; for he poured out his soul, he poured out his life) a sacrifice or offering for sin, (do not, oh! do not stumble at it; but rather wait on the Lord to understand it: for we speak in this matter what we know) a sacrifice unto the Father, and in it tasted death for every man; and that it is upon consideration (and through God's acceptance of this sacrifice for sin) that the sins of believers are pardoned, that God might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus, or who is of the faith of Jesus.

3. What is attributed to that body, we acknowledge and give to that body in its place, according as the scripture attributeth it, which is through and because of that which dwelt and acted in it. But that which sanctified and kept the body pure (and made all acceptable in him) was the life, holiness, and righteousness of the Spirit. And the same thing that kept his vessel pure, it is the same thing that cleanseth us. The value which the natural flesh and blood had, was from that; in its coming from that, in its acting in that, in its suffering through that: yea, indeed, that hath the virtue; that is it which is of an unchangeable nature, which abideth for ever; which is pure, and maketh pure for ever; and it is impossible for a man to touch it, but he must feel cleansing by it. Now this living virtue and power man was shut out from by the fall; but through the true knowledge of the death of Christ, the way is made open for it again, and man brought to it to be baptized, washed, cleansed, sanctified, fitted for and filled with life. So that this it is that doth the thing; this is it from whence Christ had his own flesh and blood (for we are taught, both by the Spirit, and by the scriptures, to distinguish between Christ's own flesh and that of ours, which he took up and made his); which flesh and blood we feed of in the Spirit; which they cannot feed on which serve at the outward tabernacle; nor they neither which know only

only the outward body; but they only that feed in the Spirit.

Now of this thing we might ſpeak yet more clearly and plainly, could men hear our words. But if we have ſpoken to you earthly things, (in parables and figures) ſuitable to your underſtanding, and ye believe not, how ſhall ye believe, if we ſpeak to you heavenly things; if we ſhould tell you plainly of the Father, in whom is all the life of the Son, and all the virtue and ſalvation that ever the Son had from him? The Jews were to learn in types, figures, and ſhadows, till Chriſt came. And after Chriſt came, he alſo taught them in reſemblances and ſimilitudes of things: and the apoſtle wrote and ſpake much to perſons, as juſt coming out of that ſtate, in a language ſuited to that ſtate. But he that comes into the thing itſelf, and is taught there by the Spirit, after he is grown up and made capable, he is taught plainly the nature of the heavenly things, and the words of the apoſtles, (concerning the deep things of God) which are myſterious to others, are manifeſt and plain to him. Yea, the Lord ſo teacheth him things, as words cannot utter; that is, he ſo knoweth the peace of God, the joy of his Spirit, the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, his wiſdom, righteouſneſs, and pure precious ways of ſanctifying the heart, the tender mercy, faithfulneſs, and rich love of the Father, &c. as he cannot utter to any man; nay, ſo as he never learned (nor could learn) from words about the things; but by the ſenſe and experience of the thing itſelf, the Lord (in whom are the depths of life, and who giveth the ſenſe and underſtanding of the deep things of the Spirit) opening them in him, and manifeſting them to him. And indeed this is the right and excellent way of knowledge, to come into the union, to come into the thing itſelf; to learn in the union, to ſee and know in the thing. This is the way that the Lord teacheth all his children in the new covenant, by the inward life, by the pure light within, by the inward demonſtration of his Spirit, by the power and virtue of the truth itſelf,

which it hath in him that is true. And he that is in the Son, hath ſome meaſure of this life; and he that hath not ſome meaſure of this life, is not in the Son; but in a talk and wiſe knowledge of things after the fleſh, which will periſh, and he with it, who abideth there. For no man can be ſaved, but by coming into the knowledge which is of a pure, eternal, living, ſaving nature. Can an opinion which a man takes up concerning Chriſt from the ſcriptures (and caſting himſelf thereupon) ſave him? For it is no more than an opinion or judgment unto a man, unleſs he be in the life and power of the thing itſelf. Then indeed it is truth to him, knowledge in him, right knowledge; otherwiſe it is but knowledge falſely ſo called; knowledge which will not ſubdue his heart to truth, nor hath its ſeat there; but in his head, making him wiſe and able there to oppoſe truth, and ſo bringing him into a ſtate of condemnation, wrath, and miſery, beyond the heathen, and making him harder to be wrought upon by the light and power of the truth, than the very heathen. Therefore conſider your ways, O profeſſors of Chriſtianity! and do not deſpiſe the hand which is ſtretched forth to you in the love of God, and in the motion and guidance of his Spirit, who condeſcends to you exceedingly, that he might reach to his own in you, and ſcatter your apprehenſions, imaginations, and conceivings about the meanings of ſcriptures, (which are as ſo many chains of death and darkneſs upon you) that ye might come to him in whom is life, and who gives life freely to all who come to him. Oh! obſerve what bars were in the way of the Scribes and Phariſees! They would not come to him that they might have life; nay, indeed, they could not, as they ſtood. There are greater bars in your way; yea, it is harder for many of you to come to him, than it was for them. My upright deſire to the Lord for you is, that he would remove the ſtumbling-blocks out of your way, that he would batter and knock down the fleſh in you, that he would ſtrip you of all your knowledge of ſcriptures according

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to the flesh, that ye might be made by him capable of knowing and receiving things according to the Spirit, and then ye will know how to understand, honour, and make use of the letter also; but till then ye cannot but make use of it both against your own souls, and against Christ and his truth.

And then for setting up a natural principle, we are further from that than ye are aware. For we were as shy of this, and jealous that it was a natural principle, as ye can be, and started from it, divers of us, till the Lord, by his eternal power, and demonstration of his Spirit, reached our hearts, and shewed us that it was the seed of the kingdom, (even the root of all the spiritual life, that either we ourselves formerly, or ever any else received at any time) and gave us the sight of the things of the kingdom in it, and at length wrought that in us, and for us, by it, which never was wrought in us before, and which can be wrought by nothing else but the power of the Spirit. Now having certainly felt and known the thing in our own hearts, and having also seen the snares and nets which the enemy lays for you, whereby he keeps you from the true bread, and from the water and wine of the kingdom, (even as he kept us formerly) how can we hold our peace, but witness to you (in the love and drawings of the Spirit of the Lord) of the truth, life, and power which we have felt in Jesus, though ye become our enemies therefore? Nor do we this to bring you to another opinion, or outward way (that is not our end); but that ye might feel the thing itself, and know assuredly what is the truth, in that which never was deceived itself, nor ever deceived any; nor will suffer any to be deceived who are joined to it, and abide in it. Oh! why should ye wander in the dark opinions and uncertainties of the night? Why should ye not rather come to that wherein the light of the day springs, and out of which it shines? And can the natural man (who hath his eyes) be deceived about the light of the natural day? Doth he not know the light of the day, both from the lights, and also

from the darkneſs of the night? Ten thouſand times more certain and inwardly ſatisfied is he, who is born of the ſpiritual day, brought forth in the light thereof, and who ſpiritually ſees, lives, and walks therein. So that there is no doubt in him who is grown up into the thing; but he hath the aſſurance of faith, (which is far above the aſſurance of outward ſenſe or reaſon) and the aſſurance of underſtanding. Oh! bleſſed is he who hath an eye to ſee, an ear to hear, an heart to underſtand, the things which God hath revealed by his Spirit in this our day, the living way which he hath now made manifeſt, the principle of life that he hath raiſed out of the grave of death. But he that reproacheth and ſpeaketh evil of this, (that will neither enter in himſelf, nor ſuffer others) he is far from receiving the bleſſing or bleſſedneſs of this ſeed; but groweth up in the wrong nature and ſpirit, the end whereof is to be burned, with all that is in union with it, and groweth up from it. Therefore come out from that ſpirit; come out of that dark mind and nature, which never ſaw, nor can ſee the truth; but ſetteth up opinions and appearances of things inſtead of it; and receive the anointing which is given with and in the ſeed, which is raiſed in ſome, and viſited in many, in this day of the Lord's love and tender mercy; to whom the living, the ſenſible, the redeemed ſing praiſes, and on whom they wait, for the further manifeſting of his power and glory in them daily more and more.

Now, friends, if ye will know aright, or believe aright, ye muſt know and believe in him, who was with the Father before the world was; who was the Saviour, the Jeſus, the Chriſt from everlaſting. For what makes him ſo? Is it not his nature? Is it not the power of ſalvation in him? His taking up a body made no alteration in him, added nothing to him; only it was neceſſary that he ſhould take it up, to fulfil the will in it, and to offer it up a ſacrifice in his own life and Spirit to the Father. This we firmly believe;

lieve; and this alſo we cannot but ſay further, that the virtue, the value, the worth, the excellency of what was done by him in the body, was not of the body, but it was in him before time, in time, and will be after time, and for ever: yea, it is he to whom the name Jeſus and Chriſt did of right belong before he took up the body: and he only put forth in the body the ſaving virtue which he had before, which belonged to the nature, to the anointing in him, whether ever he had ſaved any with it or no. And this virtue, this life, this Spirit, this nature of his, is the food, the righteouſneſs, the garment of life and ſalvation, which he (through the death of the body) made and prepared a living way for the ſoul to come to, to feed on, and be clothed with. I can hardly ſtop ſpeaking of theſe things for your ſakes, that through my words (or the words of whom the Lord ſhall pleaſe) ye might come to feel that which is able to give you the holy underſtanding, and might come to the true ſenſe and experience of the truth itſelf, and might ſee who hath blinded you, and how he hath blinded you, and fed you with huſks and dry food, inſtead of that which hath the true living ſap in it. But while ye ſee and judge in that which is wrong, ye muſt needs judge amiſs both of yourſelves and others, and alſo of the truth itſelf, and of the words ſpoken, either formerly or now, concerning it, whereby ye expoſe and bring yourſelves under the righteous judgment of the truth itſelf, even of the Son, and the light of his day, which hath power from the Father to judge all falſe appearances, deceits, and deceivers.

POSTSCRIPT.

IT hath pleaſed the Lord, as he manifeſted his Chriſt glorioufly before the apoſtaſy, ſo to manifeſt him ſo again. For he was not only born (in the fleſh) of the virgin Mary; but he was alſo born in the Spirit of the woman clothed with the ſun, which had the moon under her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve ſtars. She alſo brought forth the man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, Rev. xii.

Now of this appearance and return of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and his freſh bringing forth of his life and power in his body, the church, there are many witneſſes, who have ſeen, felt, and taſted thereof, with the eyes and ſenſes which are of God, and of the new-birth. And of this (in the love and good-will of God, and from the drawings and requirings of his Spirit) they bear witneſs to others, that they alſo might come to ſee the glory and brightneſs of his day, and rejoice therein. For indeed it is a glorious day inwardly in ſpirit, to thoſe that are quickened and gathered to the living Shepherd and Biſhop of the ſoul, by the eternal arm of his power. And happy is the eye that ſees the things that they ſee, and the ear that hears what they hear, and the heart which underſtands the things which God hath revealed in and unto them by his Spirit.

Glorious was the appearance of Chriſt in the fleſh; but there were blocks in the way of the Jews, that they could not know, own, believe and receive him. And glorious is the adminiſtration of his life in Spirit, in this day of his power; but there are alſo blocks lying in the way of them to whom it is ſent, which cauſe

cauſe them to ſtumble at it, and keep them both from letting it into them, and alſo from giving up to it. But bleſſed was he who was not offended in Chriſt then, and bleſſed is he who is not offended at him now. For he that is offended at him, who is life, and gives life, ſtumbling at the preſent way of diſpenſation which God hath choſen to give it out by, how ſhall he live? This is the cauſe that ſo many poor hearts lie mourning and grovelling on the earth, groaning becauſe of their ſins, fearing becauſe of the ſtrength of the enemy, and the corruptions of their own hearts, which are continually ready to betray them into his hands; becauſe they know not him who hath ſtretched out his arm, and is come in his power to deliver; but are prejudiced againſt the way wherein he hath and doth deliver. Yea, they know not his voice who calls, *Come unto me; I am the reſurrection and the life. He that believeth in me, ſhall receive my ſtrength; and though he were ever ſo weak, ſhall become as David; and though ever ſo unclean, ſhall find the waters which ſpring from my well to cleanſe him, and nouriſh him to life everlaſting.*

How tenderly did Chriſt viſit the Jews in the days of his fleſh? How powerfully, and in the true authority of God, did he preach among them? What mighty works did he ſhew? And yet they could not believe. Why ſo? The enemy had entered them with his temptations, had got ſomewhat into their minds of a contrary nature, to keep out thereby the ſenſe, knowledge, and acknowledgment of him. So that when their hearts were even overcome with his power and ſweet precious doctrine, and ready to yield that this was he, this was the Chriſt indeed, then the enemy raiſed up ſome argument or other to prejudice them againſt him, that he might thereby beat them off, and drive them back again from owning or receiving him. "This man is not of God," ſay ſome; "for he "keepeth not the ſabbath." He cannot be a prophet, ſay others, becauſe "he is of Galilee, out of "which no prophet ariſeth." He "cannot" be Chriſt,

Chriſt, ſaith a third ſort, becauſe "we know whence "he is; but when Chriſt cometh, no man knoweth "whence he is." He is not holy, ſtrict, and zealous, according to the law, ſay others; but a looſe perſon, "a man gluttonous, and a wine-bibber; a friend of "publicans and ſinners;" one who teacheth not his diſciples to faſt and pray, (as the Phariſees did theirs, and John, who was generally looked upon as a prophet, did his) but juſtifieth them in plucking the ears of corn on the ſabbath-day, and ſo thereby rather encouraging them to break it, than ſtrictly to obſerve and keep it according to God's law. He is a "blaſphemer," ſay ſome, (ſpeaks moſt horrid blaſphemy) "making himſelf equal "with God." He reproacheth the moſt ſtrict and zealous men that we have, (even our teachers and interpreters of the law and prophets) calling them "hypocrites, "painted ſepulchres, blind guides," &c. and pronounceth woe upon woe againſt them. And thoſe that are the children of Abraham he calls the children of the devil; and ſaith, "He that committeth ſin, is "the ſervant of ſin; but if the Son (meaning him-"ſelf) make you free, ye ſhall be free indeed." And if we will have life in us, we muſt believe in him, and eat his fleſh, and drink his blood. (Did ever Moſes, or any of the prophets, teach ſuch doctrine?) Again, he ſaith, "If a man keep my ſaying, "he ſhall never ſee death;" whereas Abraham and the prophets (who believed God, and kept his ſayings) are all dead. This made them even conclude he had a devil, John viii. 52. So how could they underſtand him when he ſaid, he was "the good "Shepherd, and the door," &c. and "that all that "ever came before him were thieves and robbers;" would they not look upon this as witneſſing of himſelf, and endeavouring to ſet up himſelf? And when he ſaid, "Verily, verily, before Abraham was, I am;" were they not ready to ſtone him, for ſpeaking a falſe and impoſſible thing, as it ſeemed to them; he manifeſtly being not yet fifty years old? But ſuppoſe it to be true, that he was before Abraham, how then could he be

be the Meſſiah, who was to come of Abraham, and out of the loins of David, according to the ſcriptures? And then for his miracles, having beforehand concluded that he was a bad man, a ſinner, a breaker of the ſabbath, a blaſphemer, a deceiver of the people, &c. how eaſy was it for them to harden themſelves againſt them, and to infer that he wrought not theſe things by the power of God, but by the aid and aſſiſtance of the devil, to overthrow the laws and ordinances of Moſes, and to ſet up himſelf and his new doctrine by? Indeed many (and ſome ſeemingly ſtrong and unanſwerable) were the exceptions which the wiſdom and underſtanding in them (which was out of the life and power of truth) formed againſt Chriſt, whereby they juſtified themſelves in their refuſal of him, who was ſealed and ſent of the Father, and ſo excluded themſelves the kingdom, and the righteouſneſs thereof.

This is paſt, and they can condemn them now, who themſelves are acting over again the ſame thing in ſpirit. It pleaſeth the Lord thus to ſuffer things to be, ſtill ſo to give forth the diſpenſations of his life, as they alone that are in ſome meaſure of his life can diſcern them. And the ſame ſpirit (under a new guiſe) ſtill oppoſeth truth in its preſent appearance and diſpenſation, and ſtirreth men up to ſlight and blaſpheme that holy name and power, which they that believe in are ſaved and ſanctified by. Well, what ſhall I ſay to you? Oh! that ye could diſcern ſpirits! Oh! that ye could ſee what ſpirit ye are of, and whom ye ſerve, in oppoſing the preſent diſpenſation of life! Oh! that ye could ſee how ye read ſcriptures out of that which wrote them, and bend them againſt that which wrote them, making yourſelves wiſe and ſtrong in a wrong wiſdom and knowledge againſt the Lord, and againſt his Chriſt, whom he hath ſet upon his holy hill of Sion, and who appeareth there, though you ſee it not. For Sion is not now literal, or after the fleſh (the day is come, the ſhadows are gone); but Sion is the holy hill of God

God in Spirit, upon which the heavenly Jeruſalem was built, which is revealed, come down, and coming down from heaven, and many of the heavenly citizens dwell there already, and more are coming thither to dwell; for even from the eaſt, weſt, north, and ſouth, ſhall the gathering be, to ſit with Abraham, Iſaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom which cannot be ſhaken; which kingdom was received by the Chriſtians formerly before the apoſtaſy, and is now received again, bleſſed be his name who lives and reigns in power over all the ſpirits of darkneſs and deceit, maintaining his pure life and truth in the hearts of his children, in deſpite of them all.

But why ſhould you thus err in heart from the pure truth? Why ſhould you not open to him that knocks in his holy power, and in the demonſtrations of his Spirit to your conſcience? Why ſhould a ſubtil device of the deceiver be let in and hugged by you, to cauſe you to thruſt him back from your hearts who is the Word of eternal life, and with whom are the words of eternal life? The Lord God diſcover the deep deceits of the enemy to you, where he captivateth your hearts and underſtandings, that it may not be always ſaid of you, as it was of the Jews, "he came unto his "own, and his own received him not!" But to as many as received him, he gave power in the day of his fleſh; and he giveth much more power to them that receive him in ſpirit (in the day of his Spirit) to become the ſons of God. And becauſe they are ſons, he poureth out abundantly of his Spirit upon them; and he that hath the Spirit, hath the Son; and he that hath the Son, hath life: but he that hath not the Son (but blaſphemeth the appearance and light of his Spirit) hath not life; but is yet in that wiſdom and knowledge which is death, and which keeps him dead.

Now the Lord of his tender mercy make you ſenſible of, and pardon your oppoſing and reſiſting his truth; and alſo cauſe the light of life to ſhine in

in your hearts, quickening and guiding you thereby out of the land of death and darkneſs, into the holy land of life; that all that ſincerely breathe after truth may (through the faithful travel) come to ſit down, dwell, and feed together in it, in the one power, in the one life, in the one Holy Spirit, where is pure reſt and peace, perfect joy and ſatisfaction for evermore. Amen.

Some QUERIES

CONCERNING

CHRIST, and his APPEARANCES; his taking upon him our Fleſh: As alſo concerning his Fleſh and Blood, and our being formed thereof, and feeding thereon.

Query 1. WHETHER there was not a neceſſity of Chriſt's taking upon him our fleſh, for the redemption of thoſe that had ſinned, and the ſatisfaction of the juſtice offended?

Query 2. Whether the Father did not accordingly prepare a body for him, to do his will in all things in; and particularly to offer up to him the acceptable ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole world?

Query 3. Whether it was not neceſſary, in this reſpect alſo, that Chriſt ſhould take upon him our fleſh, that he might have experience of our temptations and infirmities, and become a merciful and faithful high-prieſt and interceſſor for us?

Query 4. Wherein lay the value and worth of his ſacrifice, and of all he did? Did it lie chiefly on the thing

thing done, or in the life wherein he did it, in that he did it in the pure faith and obedience to the Father? He became obedient unto death, even the death of the croſs; and he through the eternal Spirit offered himſelf without ſpot to God?

Query 5. What was he, for whom the Father prepared a body, and who took it up to do the will, and did the will in it? Was he not the arm of God, the power of God, the Saviour and ſalvation of God, the Jeſus and Chriſt of God?

Query 6. To whom do the names and titles Jeſus and Chriſt chiefly and in the firſt place belong? Do they belong to the body which was taken by him, or to him who took the body? The body hath its nature and properties, and the eternal Word, or Son of God, (the pure ſpotleſs Lamb, the fountain of innocency) its nature and properties. Now the query is, which was the appointed Saviour of the Father? Which was the anointed of the Father, chiefly, and in the firſt place? Whether the body prepared, or he for whom the body was prepared, to do the will, and offer up the acceptable ſacrifice in?

Query 7. Which is Chriſt's fleſh and blood which we are to partake of, whereof we are to be formed, which we are to eat and drink, and which is meat and drink indeed, nouriſhing to life everlaſting? Is it the fleſh and blood of the body, which was prepared for, and taken by him, wherein he tabernacled and appeared? Or is it the fleſh and blood of him, who took, tabernacled, and appeared in the body? For that which he took upon him was our garment, even the fleſh and blood of our nature, which is of an earthly periſhing nature; but he is of an eternal nature, and his fleſh, and blood, and bones are of his nature. Now as the life and nature which is begotten in his, is ſpiritual; ſo that which feeds, and is the nouriſhment of it, muſt needs be of a ſpiritual and eternal nature.

Query 8. What is the bread which came down from heaven? Is not the bread and the fleſh all one? Outwardly-viſible fleſh and blood was not in heaven, nor came

came down from heaven; but the bread of life did come down from heaven, which the heavenly birth feeds on and lives by. For that which redeems, that which is Jesus, (the Saviour) came down from heaven, and took upon him a body of flesh here on earth, in which he manifested himself as King, Priest, and Prophet, and did the work appointed him by the Father, John xvii. 1, &c.

Query 9. What was that which saved people outwardly from their outward infirmities and diseases, while Christ was on earth in that body? Was it the body, or the life, power, and Spirit of the Father within the body, and manifest through the body? And can any thing less save inwardly? Now that which saves, that which hath the virtue and power of salvation in it, that the eye of faith is to fix upon, and not to stick or stop in that through which the life works it.

Query 10. Who was he that humbled himself, that made himself of no reputation, that took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and found in fashion (or habit) as a man? Was it the body of flesh, or was it he that was glorified of the Father before the world was? And who is to have the honour and exaltation? At whose name is every knee to bow? Is not the reward to him who laid down his glory to take upon him the body of flesh, and appear in it, that he might honour, glorify, and fulfil the will of his Father?

Query 11. Are not the children and he of one? Are not he and they of the same stock? ("Both he that "sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of "one," Heb. ii. 11.) Is it not from thence that he is not ashamed to call them brethren, even because he finds the nature, Spirit, and life of his Father in them? What makes a child to God? Is it not the being begotten of the Father, and born of the Spirit? And that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit. Now mark: have we the denomination and relation with Christ from that which is spiritual, and hath Christ himself the name from or because of the body of flesh? Nay,

Nay, nay; the name Chriſt was from the anointing which was in the body, which ran into and filled the veſſel. It is true, the body, in and by the union, partakes with him of his name; but the name belongs chiefly and moſt properly to the treaſure in the veſſel.

Query 12. What is it to put on Chriſt, or what is the putting on of Chriſt? Is it the putting on of that body of fleſh? Or the putting on a belief concerning him, according to what is ſaid of him in ſcripture? Or is it not rather a putting on of his nature, his ſeed, his Spirit, his life, wherewith the ſouls of thoſe that are born from above are clothed, as the body is with a garment?

Query 13. Who was it that ſaid, I am the reſurrection and the life? Was it not Chriſt? And what did he ſay it concerning? Did he ſay it concerning the body, or did he ſay it concerning the power and virtue of the Father which was in the body? Did he not ſay it concerning that which had the power of life in it before it took up the body, and had alſo the power of life while it was in the body? yea, and could raiſe up not only other bodies, but that alſo after it had laid it down? For after it was laid in the grave, he could raiſe it up, and take it on again, as well as he did at firſt, when it was firſt prepared, John x. 17, 18.

Query 14. If I, or any one elſe, have felt the ſaving arm of the Lord revealed in us; if we have felt a meaſure of the ſame life, power, and anointing revealed in our veſſels as was revealed in his, is it not of the ſame nature? Is it not the ſame thing? Is not Chriſt the ſeed? And is not this ſeed ſown in the heart? Now if this ſeed ſpring and grow up in me into a ſpiritual ſhape or form, (though it be but of a babe) is not Chriſt then formed in me? If I be ingrafted into, and grow up in it, am I not ingrafted into Chriſt, (the true olive-tree, the true vine) and do I not grow up in him? And is not this the ſame Chriſt that took upon him the body of fleſh, and offered it without

without the gates of Jeruſalem? Is there any more than one, or is there any other than he? Is Chriſt divided? Is there one Chriſt within, and another without? He that knoweth the leaſt meaſure of the thing, doth he not know the thing in ſome meaſure? And he that is in the leaſt meaſure of the thing, is he not in the thing? He that knoweth the Son, doth he not know the Father? And he that knoweth the Spirit, doth he not alſo know the Son? And he that is in the Spirit, is he not in the Son? For they are one nature and being. A man may have notions of the one, and not of the other; but their nature, their being, their life, their virtue is inſeparable. And as Chriſt ſaid concerning the Father, That he was in the Father, and the Father in him; and that he that ſaw him, ſaw the Father; ſo may it not be as truly affirmed (in the true ſenſe and underſtanding of life) concerning Chriſt, that he is in the Spirit, and the Spirit in him; and that he that ſeeth the Spirit, ſeeth him; and he that ſeeth him ſeeth the Spirit? For he is the Spirit, according to that ſcripture, 2 Cor. iii. 17. "Now "the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the "Lord is, there is liberty." What to do? Why, to ſee and read within the veil, and to behold the glory of the Lord, which is revealed there; which they whom the veil was over formerly, or whom the veil is over now, have not liberty to do. Here is confuſion and impoſſibility to man's wiſdom; that Chriſt ſhould be all one with the Spirit; that Chriſt ſhould ſend the Spirit in his name, and alſo himſelf be the Spirit whom he ſends. (This is an hard ſaying, who can bear it?) And yet this confuſion to man, is God's wiſdom, and precious in their eye who are taught of him.

For it is one and the ſame Chriſt that was ſignified in types and ſhadows under the law, revealed in the fulneſs of time in that prepared body, and afterwards in Spirit. Now after he was aſcended, he received the Spirit ſo as he had not received him before; and ſo having received the promiſe of the Father, he ſo diſ-

penſeth the Spirit to his brethren and diſciples, as it had not been diſpenſed before. Indeed he comforted and refreſhed his people under the law by his Holy Spirit, which was their inſtructor then, Neh. ix. 20. and taught them the things of God under types, ſhadows, and reſemblances. When he came in the body, he choſe out diſciples, whom he taught the things of the kingdom, and was a refreſher and comforter of them therein. And was not this another comforter than thoſe had under the law? Had the Jews before ever any ſuch comforter, as Chriſt was to his diſciples in his bodily preſence? Now when he aſcends, he receives the Spirit from the Father, as the Father had promiſed him; and having ſo received him, he ſends him to them for their comforter. And may not this juſtly be termed another comforter than Chriſt was in his bodily preſence? And yet is it not alſo the ſame Spirit of life, that had been with them in that body? So that it is another in the way of adminiſtration, but the ſame in ſubſtance; even the Word which was from the beginning, the Spirit which was from everlaſting; and to everlaſting there is no other.

Now as the Father ſent the Son, and yet was with and in the Son; ſo the Son ſending the Spirit, he alſo is with and in the Spirit. And as it is the Father's will, that the ſame honour be given to the Son as is given to him; ſo it is the Son's pleaſure, that the ſame honour be given to his Spirit as is given to him. Yea, as he that will worſhip the Father, muſt worſhip the Son, muſt come to him in the Son, muſt appear before him in the Son, muſt reverence and kiſs the Son; ſo he that will come to Chriſt, will worſhip him, muſt come to him in the Spirit, muſt bow to him in the Spirit. Yea, he that will know and worſhip Chriſt in his fulneſs, (in the majeſty of his glory, dominion, and power) muſt learn to bow at the loweſt appearance of his light and Spirit, even at the very feet of Jeſus; for that is the loweſt part of the body.

Query 15. Did not the bridegroom go away, as to his appearance in fleſh, that he might come again in Spirit?

Spirit? Did not the apoſtles, who knew his appearance in fleſh, and his tabernacling among them, know alſo afterwards his appearance in Spirit, and his tabernacling in them? And were not their hearts filled with joy unſpeakable, and full of glory, becauſe of the preſence of the bridegroom? Did they not know the man-child born and brought forth in Spirit, as really as ever he was born and brought forth in fleſh? Yea, did they not travail and help to bring him forth? Were there not many in that day, who could ſay concerning the ſpiritual and inward appearance of the bridegroom, We know that the Son of God, the eternal life, the pure power and wiſdom of the Father, is come? Did they not receive from him the underſtanding which he gives in and by his coming? Yea, were they not in him that is true, even in Jeſus Chriſt the Son, who is the true God, and life eternal? (1 John v. 20.) Had they not received the kingdom which could not be ſhaken? And did they never ſee and converſe with the King in the kingdom? Nay, did not he walk in them, and they in him, and he ſup with them, and they with him, in the kingdom? Oh! that ye could read in Spirit! Oh! that ye did receive that meaſure of life from Chriſt, which the Father hath allotted you, that ye might read therein; but the letter (read out of the Spirit) darkeneth and killeth.

Query 16. What is the laver of regeneration, or the water wherewith the *ſoul* is waſhed, and whereof a man is born again? Is it outward or inward? Is it the water which ran out of the ſide of the natural body, when it was pierced with a ſpear? Or the water which ſprings from the fountain of life, the water which floweth from the Spirit? What are the waters which corrupt, mud, and defile the mind? Are they outward waters? And what are the waters which purify and cleanſe it? Can they be of a lower nature than ſpiritual? What are the waters which anſwer the thirſt of the ſoul after life, after purity, after ſalvation; that refreſh and glad the heart of him that drinketh thereof? Are they not from the pure river, clear as chryſ-

tal, which runs from the throne? And if the water which cleanseth and nourisheth the *soul* be spiritual; can the flesh and blood (which falleth not short of the water in its virtues, properties, and operations) be inferior to it in nature and kind?

Query 17. Can outward blood cleanse the conscience? Ye that are spiritual consider. Can outward water wash the *soul* clean? Ye that have ever felt the blood of sprinkling from the Lord upon your consciences, and your consciences cleansed thereby; did ye ever feel it to be outward? It is one thing what a man apprehends (in the way of notion) from the letter concerning the things of God, and another thing what a man feels in Spirit.

Query 18. Seeing the apostle speaks of purifying the heavenly things themselves, Heb. ix. 23. it would seriously be inquired into, and the Lord waited on, to know what nature these sacrifices must be of, which cleanse the heavenly things? Whether they must not of necessity be heavenly? If so, then whether was it the flesh and blood of the veil, or the flesh and blood within the veil? Whether was it the flesh and blood of the outward earthly nature, or the flesh and blood of the inward spiritual nature? Whether was it the flesh and blood which Christ took of the first Adam's nature, or the flesh and blood of the second Adam's nature?

Query 19. What is that, wherein they that are in the Spirit, behold as in a glass, with open face, the glory of the Lord? Is it not Christ? And how is Christ so? Is it not as he is made manifest in Spirit? Doth he know Christ aright, or believe in him aright, that knoweth him according to his bodily appearance, (that can relate, and firmly believe, what he did therein) or he that knoweth and believeth in his Spirit and power? Henceforth know we no man after the flesh; no not Christ, (saith the apostle) though we have known him so. What meaneth that? The same thing may be known several ways: outwardly, inwardly; according to the *flesh*, according to the *Spirit*.

Now

Now, if ye are of the Spirit, live in the Spirit; if ye live in the Spirit, know in the Spirit the things of God after the Spirit, as the Spirit reveals, as that which is born of God receives; and not as the wisdom, underſtanding, reaſon, and fleſh of man can receive; and then ye will come into fellowſhip with Chriſt, both in his death and reſurrection, and know indeed the reſurrection both of the life and of the body: which to know, and be able to acknowledge in Jeſus, is very precious.

Query 20. Hath not Chriſt made us kings and prieſts to God, even his Father? What is it that is the king and prieſt in us? And if we be prieſts, muſt we not have ſomewhat to offer? What have we to offer? And what makes our ſacrifices ſavoury and acceptable? Is it not that of his Spirit, that of his life, which is in them? Is it not the faith, the love, the obedience (which are all of him) wherein they are offered? If we ſhould give our bodies to be burned, (in the way of teſtifying to truth) without this would they be accepted? If we give but a cup of cold water in this, is it not accepted?

Now, is the life, the faith, the obedience of the Son, the thing which is of value in us? And was it not the ſame which was of value in him? What did the Father require of the Son, for ſatisfaction for Adam's diſobedience? Was it not the obedience of the ſecond Adam, which weighed down the tranſgreſſion and diſobedience of the firſt? Doth not this make all righteous, (who are of him, and found in his nature) as the tranſgreſſion of the firſt made all unrighteous? Rom. v. 19. Sacrifice and offering thou wouldſt not. Lo, I come to do thy will, O God! (He taketh away the firſt, that he may eſtabliſh the ſecond.) By the which will we are ſanctified, through the offering of the body of Jeſus Chriſt once for all, Heb. x. 9, 10. What can be plainer to that which hath truth's ear? So, by truth manifeſted in the heart, there is nothing denied of what is ſaid concerning Chriſt in

ſcripture, but every thing owned, believed, and received in its proper place.

Query 21. Who is the Captain of our ſalvation? Who is it that girdeth himſelf with might, riding on conquering and to conquer all the enemies of the ſoul? Is it not the Lamb? Is it not Chriſt? Is it not he whoſe name is called the *Word of God?* And yet how can it be he? Is not he to ſit at God's right hand, until his enemies be made his footſtool?

Query 22. What is the water and Spirit, whereof a man muſt be born again, or he cannot ſee the kingdom of God? Is it Chriſt's fleſh and blood or no? His fleſh ſaw no corruption; and incorruptible fleſh and blood may enter the kingdom, though corruptible cannot.

Query 23. What did all the types, veils, and ſhadows under the law ſignify? Did they ſignify another veil? Did they ſignify or ſhadow out that which was outward? Or did they ſhadow out and ſignify that inward life, virtue, and ſaving power, which was the ſubſtance of all?

Query 24. Is not the ſubſtance, the life, the anointing called Chriſt, wherever it is found? Doth not the name belong to the whole body (and every member in the body) as well as to the head? Are they not all of one; yea, all one in the anointing? Was not this the great deſire of his heart to the Father, that they all might be one, even as the Father and Chriſt were one, John xvii. 21, 23. And ſo being one in the ſame Spirit, (one in the ſame life, one in the ſame divine nature, 2 Pet. i. 4. even partakers of God's holineſs, Heb. xii. 10.) Chriſt is not aſhamed to call them brethren, Heb. ii. 11. nor is the apoſtle aſhamed to give them the name *Chriſt* together with him, 1 Cor. xii. 12. The body is the ſame with the head; one and the ſame in nature; and doth not the name belong to the nature in the whole? So that the name is not given to the veſſel, but to the nature, to the heavenly treaſure, to that which is of him in the

the veſſel, to that which the Lord from heaven begets in his own image and likeneſs, of his own ſubſtance, of his own ſeed, of his own Spirit and pure life.

Query 25. What was that live coal from the altar, whereby the prophet Iſaiah's iniquity was taken away, and his ſin purged? Iſa. vi. 6, 7. Can any thing purge away ſin, but the blood of Chriſt?

Query 26. What are the leaves of the tree of life, which are for the healing of the nations? Is not Chriſt the tree of life? Is there any other tree of life beſides him? Is there any other healer? And what do theſe leaves of the tree of life heal the nations of? Do they not heal them of their ſins, and of the ſickneſſes and diſtempers of their ſouls becauſe of their ſins? And have theſe leaves any of the blood of Chriſt in them or no?

Query 27. Is not Chriſt the true vine, the true olive-tree; the living vine, the living olive-tree; the ſpiritual vine, the ſpiritual olive-tree; into which all the ſpiritually-living are ingrafted? As the Father is the huſbandman; ſo is not the Son the vine? And hath not this ſpiritual, this eternal vine in it juice and ſap of an eternal nature? And is not this ſap its blood?

Query 28. Is there not a choice vine, to which the foal and aſs's colt of the ſeed of Judah is tied? And are not the garments and clothes of the true Jews waſhed in the wine, and in the blood of the grapes of this vine? Gen. xlix. 11.

Query 29. What is that which the earthly nature ſlays? And what is the blood which the earthly nature ſhall diſcloſe, and the ſlain which it ſhall no more cover?

Query 30. What are the robes which are waſhed and made white in the blood of the Lamb? And how are they waſhed and made white therein? And what is the blood (of what nature? earthly or ſpiritual?) wherein they are waſhed and made white?

Query 31. What is it to have, or how come we to have, fellowſhip with Chriſt in his death, and to ſuffer and be crucified with him? Is it by having our natural

bodies crucified on the ſame croſs of wood (or ſome ſuch-like one) as his body was crucified on? Or by having the fleſhly nature crucified, ſubdued, and worn out of our ſouls, minds, ſpirits, &c. by the power of the Spirit? Rom. viii. 13. Now if the fleſh we are to put off, be of ſuch a nature and kind; to wit, inwardly and ſpiritually corrupt; muſt not the fleſh of Chriſt, which we are to put on inſtead thereof, be of as deep, inward, and ſpiritual a nature? What is the fleſh whereof we are to be unclothed, before we can be clothed with Chriſt? Is it outward or bodily? And what is Chriſt's fleſh we are to put on? Is that any more outward or bodily, than that which we are to put off?

Query 32. Is not the fleſh and blood, which they that have eternal life feed on, and which nouriſheth them up to life eternal (they continuing to feed thereon, and not feeding afterwards on ſtrange fleſh, and ſtrange blood); I ſay, is not this fleſh and blood Spirit and life? For that is it which profiteth, John vi. 63. Is it not the fleſh and blood of the Word? Was not the Word made fleſh? And did not the Word, who was made fleſh, dwell and appear in a tabernacle of fleſh, and cauſe the glory of his own divine fleſh to ſhine through that earthly fleſh? Oh! read and conſider, that ye who have ſtumbled and murmured againſt the truth, may ſtumble or murmur no more, but now at length receive the pure and precious doctrine thereof, (and ſo come to witneſs the fulfilling of that promiſe, Iſa. xxix. 18.—24.) and praiſe him who giveth underſtanding.

Query 33. Is not the true church, fleſh of Chriſt's fleſh, and bone of his bone? Is not the falſe, or antichriſtian church, fleſh of antichriſt's fleſh, and bone of antichriſt's bone? What is the fleſh of the ſpiritual whore, which is to be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Shall ever the church, which is of Chriſt's fleſh, be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Nay, doth not his fleſh make able to abide the devouring fire, and to dwell with the everlaſting burnings?

Query

Query 34. What is the pure milk of the word, which is milked out to the babes from the pure breaſt? And what is the breaſt from which it is milked out? Is it of the fleſh of Chriſt or no?

Query 35. Are not the wicked of the ſeed and fleſh of the ſerpent? Is not that the body of fleſh, of ſin, of death, which is to be put off? And are not they who are renewed in ſpirit, of the ſeed and fleſh of Chriſt? Is not that the body or garment of holineſs, of righteouſneſs, of life, which is to be put on?

Query 36. Is it not as neceſſary that the eternal Word be made fleſh inwardly, that ſo the children may feed on him, as it was for him to take on him an outward body of fleſh, to ſuffer and die for them, and to fulfil all righteouſneſs, both of the law of the letter, and of the law of the Spirit in?

Query 37. Is there not that which ſpiritually is called Sodom and Egypt? And do not they which dwell there, inſtead of eating Chriſt's fleſh, and drinking his blood, put his fleſh to pain, crucifying it in and to themſelves, trampling under foot the Son of God, and counting the blood of the covenant an unholy thing? Read the figure. Did not outward Iſrael ſuffer in outward Egypt? Did not juſt Lot ſuffer in Sodom? Doth not the ſpiritual ſeed ſuffer in and by ſpiritual Egypt? Doth not the fleſh of the holy and juſt one ſuffer in and by ſpiritual Sodom?

Query 38. What is that which the Gentile-Chriſtians, who are not Jews inward, circumciſed in heart and ſpirit, who know not the inward temple, (the place of the true Jews worſhip, where they worſhip the Father in Spirit and truth) but only worſhip in the outward court, which God hath caſt off, and left out of his meaſure, Rev. xi. 2. I ſay, What is that holy city which theſe Gentiles tread under foot forty-two months? Is it the church, which is of the fleſh and bones of Chriſt, or no?

He that knoweth the ſubſtance, the ſeed of the kingdom, the birth of the Spirit, knoweth the fleſh and blood which is of the ſeed. And this fleſh is fleſh indeed,

indeed, this blood is blood indeed, even the fleſh and blood of the ſeed's nature; but the other was but the fleſh and blood of our nature, which he honoured in taking upon him, in which he did the will, in which he offered up the acceptable ſacrifice; but yet did not give the honour from his own fleſh and blood to it. For the fleſh and blood of our nature was not his own naturally, but only as he pleaſed to take it upon him and make it his. But that whereof he formeth us, (and which he giveth us to eat and drink) is the fleſh and blood of his own nature; and this was it wherein was the virtue, and wherein is the virtue, life, and power for ever. Happy! oh! happy is he who is of it, who is taken out of and formed of him, (as Eve was of Adam) and ſo becomes fleſh of his fleſh, and bone of his bone. Then will he know the myſtery of life, feed on the thing itſelf, and not ſtumble about appearances and expreſſions, as thoſe that are out of and from the thing itſelf do, through the darkneſs of their mind, and becauſe of their ignorance of the thing ſpoken of in the ſcriptures.

An Incitation to PROFESSORS ſeriouſly to conſider, Whether they or we fail in the true Acknowledgment and Owning of the CHRIST which died at JERUSALEM.

WE, who are commonly called QUAKERS, being a people whom the Lord hath gathered (out of the wanderings, out of the many profeſſions, out of the ſeveral ſcattered eſtates and conditions, wherein his eye pitied us, and his love found us out) into a meaſure of the eternal reſt; where we have found that life, that power, that manifeſtation of the eternal Spirit, and that redeeming virtue, which we never were

were before distinctly acquainted with; I say, having tasted of this, having known this, having felt this, and come to a real enjoyment of it, in some degree, in our several measures; we could not possibly conceal this treasure, but in bowels of love (and in the movings of the life and power of the Spirit) have been drawn to testify of it to them who are left behind, grovelling under the burden of corruption, and crying out because of the sin and bondage from the powers of darkness, who have in a mist with-held their eyes from beholding that living virtue, which is able to save (and doth save, blessed be his name) therefrom.

Now this we have often found; That this our testimony hath not been received in the same Spirit and love wherein it hath gone forth; but the enemy (by his subtilty) hath raised up jealousies concerning us, and prejudices against us, as if we denied the scriptures and ordinances of God, and that Christ that died at Jerusalem; professing him only in words, (to win upon others by) but denying him in reality and substance.

To clear this latter, (for my heart is only at this present drawn out concerning that) we have solemnly professed, in the sight of the Lord God, (who hath given us the knowledge of his Son in life and power) these two things.

First, That we do really in our hearts own that Christ, who came in the fulness of time, in that prepared body, to do the Father's will (his coming into the world, doctrine, miracles, sufferings, death, resurrection, &c.) in plainness and simplicity of heart, according as it is expressed in the letter of the scriptures.

Secondly, That we own no other Christ than that, nor hold forth no other thing for Christ, but him who then appeared, and was made manifest in flesh.

Now it would be nakedly inquired into by professors, what is the reason that their jealousies still remain concerning us, and why they are still so ready to cast this upon us? Certainly if they did know and own the same thing with us, (in the Spirit, and in the power,

power, in the life, and in the love, which is of the truth) this prejudice and these hard thoughts could not remain. But if they themselves do not know Christ in the Spirit, (but only according to a relation of the letter) no marvel though they miss both of the Spirit, and of the true intent and meaning of the letter; and likewise be liable to clash against the truth, as it is made manifest in others.

And indeed the Lord hath shewn me in Spirit several times, that they themselves are guilty of that very charge (and that he will so implead them at his judgment-seat) which they cast upon us, even of denying that Christ which died at Jerusalem to be the Christ. For he that owneth the words of scripture, as he apprehends or conceives them in the reasonings of his mind, and doth not wait to have them revealed in the Spirit, keeping out of his own reasonings and conceivings, and waiting patiently till the Lord open the thing in the Spirit, he setteth up his own conceivings, or an image in his mind, of the mind of the Spirit, but misseth of the thing itself, which alone is known in the Spirit, by them who wait upon the Spirit, there to receive it, and are not hasty to set up their own reasonings and imaginations concerning the thing in the mean time.

No man can in truth call Jesus the Lord but by the Spirit. But any man that is any thing serious, and weighs the scriptures in the natural part, may so learn to acknowledge his coming into the world, and that he is Lord and King, &c. and may thus call him Lord, yea, and kindle a great heat in his affections towards him; but all this (out of the life, out of the Spirit) is but man's image, which he forms in his mind, in his reading the scriptures, and observing things therefrom. But the true calling Jesus Lord, is from the feeling of his eternal virtue in the Spirit, and finding the scriptures opened to him by the Spirit, in a principle which is above the reason, comprehends the reason, and confounds and brings it to nothing.

Again;

Again; there is no true knowledge of Chriſt, no living knowledge, no ſaving knowledge, no knowledge which hath the eternal virtue in it; but that which is received and retained in a meaſure of light given by God to the creature, in the faith which is the gift, in the grace which is ſupernatural and ſpiritual; whereas the reaſoning part is but natural. And ſuch as have received the ſpiritual underſtanding, know it to be diſtinct from the natural; and we experimentally find a very clear diſtinction, between ſcriptures ſearched out by the reaſonings of the mind (and ſo practices drawn therefrom) and ſcriptures opened by the Spirit, and felt in the life.

Now that profeſſors generally have not received their knowledge of Chriſt from the Spirit, or from ſcriptures opened in the Spirit, (and ſo know not the thing, but only ſuch a relation of the thing as man's reaſoning part may drink in from the letter of the ſcriptures) is manifeſt by this, in that they are not able in ſpirit and underſtanding to diſtinguiſh the thing itſelf from the garment wherewith it was clothed, though the ſcriptures be very expreſs therein. Speak of Chriſt according to a relation of the letter, there they can ſay ſomewhat; but come to the ſubſtance, come to the ſpirit of the thing, come to the thing itſelf, there they ſtutter and ſtammer, and ſhew plainly that they know not what it is.

Now the ſcriptures do expreſsly diſtinguiſh between Chriſt and the garment which he wore; between him that came, and the body in which he came; between the ſubſtance which was veiled, and the veil which veiled it. "Lo! I come; a body haſt thou prepared "me." There is plainly he, and the body in which he came. There was the outward veſſel, and the inward life. This we certainly know, and can never call the bodily garment Chriſt, but that which appeared and dwelt in the body. Now if ye indeed know the Chriſt of God, tell us plainly what that is which appeared in the body? Whether that was not the

the Christ before it took up the body, after it took up the body, and for ever?

And then their confining of Christ to that body, plainly manifesteth that they want the knowledge of him in spirit. For Christ is the Son of the Father; he is the infinite eternal Being, One with the Father, and with the Spirit, and cannot be divided from either; cannot be any where where they are not, nor can be excluded from any place where they are. He may take up a body, and appear in it; but cannot be confined to be no where else but there; no, not at the very time while he is there. Christ, while he was here on earth, yet was not excluded from being in heaven with the Father at the very same time; as he himself said concerning himself, "The Son of man, which is "in heaven," John iii. 13. Nor was the Father excluded from being with him in the body; but the Father was in him, and he in the Father: whereupon he said to Philip, "He that hath seen me, hath seen the "Father." What! did every one that saw that body, see the Father also? Nay, not so; but he that saw Christ, the Son of the living God, whom flesh and blood revealed not, but the Father only, (Mat. xvi. 16, 17.) he saw the Father also.

O friends! look to your knowledge of Christ, and to your faith and knowledge of the scriptures, and to your prayers also; for it is easy missing of the living substance in all these, and meeting with a shadow; which may please and make a great shew in the earthly part, in the natural understanding and affections, but satisfieth not the soul, or that which is born after the Spirit, but still the cry there goes out (where the soul is awakened) after truth, substance, life, virtue from God's Spirit in the spirit, which it alone can feed upon.

These four things following I am certain of; which he that cometh into the true light, shall infallibly experience them there.

First, That nothing can save but the knowledge of Christ, even of that very Christ, and no other, who took

took upon him the prepared body, and offered it up at Jeruſalem.

Secondly, That no knowledge of Chriſt can ſave but the living knowledge. Not a knowledge of him after the letter, (which the carnal part may get much of, and value itſelf much by) but a knowledge of him in the Spirit; which is only given to that which is begotten and born of the Spirit, and only retained by that which abides and remains in the Spirit, and runs not out into the fleſhly reaſonings, imaginings, and conceivings, about the things mentioned in the ſcriptures.

Thirdly, That that man who knoweth not Chriſt in ſpirit, nor keepeth cloſe to him in ſpirit; but (through darkneſs and miſguidance of the ſpirit of deceit) calleth the ſhinings of his light (his reproofs, his checks for that which is evil, and his ſecret motions to that which is good) natural; this man, though he ſeem to own Chriſt ever ſo much according to the letter, yet in truth denies him.

Fourthly, He that denies Chriſt (in his knockings and viſitations of him in his own heart, and before men in the truths which he holds forth by his ſervants and miniſters of his Spirit) him will he deny before his Father in heaven.

Oh! I beſeech you do not trifle about theſe things, (for they are exceeding weighty) leſt ye periſh from the way! For miſſing of the Saviour, ye muſt needs alſo miſs of the ſalvation. Oh! that ye knew your ſtate, as God knows it to be, and as it is certainly known and felt, in the meaſure of his life and Holy Spirit, by thoſe which God hath gathered thither, and whoſe eyes he hath opened, and preſerveth open there; glory be to his name therefore: *yea, glory, glory, glory, and everlaſting praiſes be ſung to him throughout all the holy land; yea, in the very heights of Sion, by the ſouls of the redeemed, from henceforth and for evermore, Amen: whoſe mercy, love, grace, wiſdom, power, and rich goodneſs remaineth and endureth for ever; by and in which the redeemed live to his praiſe, who have overcome by the blood*

of

of the Lamb, whoſe blood they know what it is, and none elſe knoweth it, but they who feel the ſprinkling and virtue of it. Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and how can we but be glad, and rejoice in his ſalvation! Oh! let all that live by the breath of thy power, and drink of thy ſtreams, ſing praiſe unto thee, and exalt thy great and wonderful name for ever and ever!

Some PROPOSITIONS and CONSIDERATIONS concerning the Nature of Church-Worſhips and Ordinances ſince the Days of the Apoſtles, for the Sake of the Simplicity which hath been long held captive therein.

HE that would know the true ſtate of the church, and ordinances thereof, muſt wait upon God in fear and humility of heart, who alone is able to give the true knowledge and underſtanding of theſe things. And he that cometh to the Spirit, waiteth in the Spirit, and receiveth the true light from the Spirit, he ſhall be able to meaſure ages and generations paſt as with a ſpan, and ſee clearly (in that light) how things were before the apoſtaſy, how while the church was in the wilderneſs, and how things ſhall be again after the apoſtaſy, when the church cometh out of the wilderneſs. She herſelf is the ſame in all; but her ſtate is different, according to the wiſdom and good pleaſure of him who variouſly diſpoſeth of her. One while ſhe is clothed, appearing in the beauty and glorious dreſs which the Lord had put upon her. Another while ſhe is ſtripped of her outward garments, and the harlot dreſſed therewith, and appearing therein. After which ſeaſon ſhe is adorned again as glorioufly (if not more glorioufly) than before; but whether

whether ever ſhe appears more in thoſe garments wherein the harlot had been dreſſed, and wherein ſhe had long appeared, (even all the time of the apoſtaſy) the Lord would be inquired of, and waited on to know. Now to help the tender and upright hearts towards the true ſenſe of theſe things, the Propoſitions and Conſiderations following are given forth, which he that ſincerely waiteth on the Lord, from him may receive the true underſtanding and right acknowledgment of.

1. That upon the coming of Chriſt, and the change of that outward covenant, the diſtinction between the outward Jew and Gentile fell, they becoming all one, as in relation to Chriſt; and then another diſtinction aroſe in relation to the faith, believers becoming Jews now, and unbelievers Gentiles.

2. That theſe true and inward Jews had not only the inward faith, the life, the power, the Spirit; but alſo a miniſtry, ordinances, and gifts of the Spirit relating to their preſent ſtate.

3. That there was a time, after a long and ſharp fight between the true miniſters, who appeared in the true light and power of the true Spirit, and the falſe miniſters, who alſo appeared as miniſters of righteouſneſs, and as in the power of the Spirit, but were not ſuch indeed, but inſtructed by Satan to transform themſelves into a reſemblance and likeneſs of miniſters of righteouſneſs: for though they ſaid they were apoſtles, and ſeemed ſo in appearance; yet their ſpirit (being tried) was found not to be the Spirit of the apoſtles: I ſay, there was a time, when there was a diviſion (or ſeparation) made, between the inward temple and the outward court.

4. That when this diviſion was made, the outward court was given to the Gentiles; not any longer reſerved by God for the true worſhippers, who worſhip in Spirit and truth; but given to the unbelievers, the worſhippers out of the true faith, the worſhippers out of the Spirit, and out of the life.

5. That henceforward (ſince this ſeparation) the believers, or true Jews, are not to be expected in the outward court (in the worſhip thereof, wherein they were found before this ſeparation) but the unbelievers, the Gentiles (who have not the true nature, but at beſt but the appearance of the Jew) are to be expected there, and the true Jew is to be looked for and found more inward.

6. That therefore which allureth to look for God there, and to wait for him in the ways and worſhips of this time of the ſeparation, is not the true Spirit (which rightly guideth the ſimple heart to the place where God appears, and where he is to be waited for); but the wrong ſpirit, who, when he cannot ſtifle the ſimplicity, and hinder it from breathing and ſeeking after God, waits to draw aſide and miſlead it.

7. That the great way of that ſpirit's miſguiding and miſleading the honeſt heart, in its breathing and longing ſtate, is not by a direct taking it off from ſeeking after God; but rather by pointing it to a way to ſeek him in, wherein he once appeared, and was enjoyed, but is now withdrawn from.

8. He that will keep cloſe to God, and not be withdrawn from him, muſt watch to his Spirit, and know the leadings of it, elſe he will not follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes; but ſtay behind in ſome obſervation or practice which the Lamb is gone out of; and ſo miſs of his leader, and meet (inſtead thereof) with another leader, even the ſpirit of antichriſt, who enters into the outward court, and outward practices, ſo ſoon as ever the Spirit of God hath left them.

9. That God's people, ſince his withdrawing inward, and giving the outward court to the Gentiles, have been much deceived by the antichriſtian ſpirit, and led captive into Babylon; inſomuch as God, when he cometh to overthrow antichriſt, with the Babylon of his building, finds them there, and calls them out from thence. For the light growing low, and the deceit great, and the ſpirit ſubtil; how can the poor, weak,

weak, innocent babe eſpy that ſpirit, and eſcape his ſnares, when he tempts to thoſe very paths and ways of worſhip wherein the ſaints had walked and met with God, before the Spirit of the Lord departed out of them, and gave them up to the Gentiles?

10. That there is danger to the people of God of not underſtanding his call out of Babylon, but abiding there, through the ſubtil entanglements of the falſe ſpirit, who bewitcheth (with the cup of fornication) to make Babylon appear as Sion, her doctrines as the truths of the goſpel, her ordinances and ways of worſhip as the true ordinances and ways of worſhip. For the deceit is exceeding deep, and the myſtery of iniquity very great, following the heart cloſe which the Lord is drawing to depart therefrom; and if the Lord God is not ſtrong and vigilant, who judgeth the whore, ſhe would ſtill keep her hold of the heart; and if the heart be not kept very cloſe to the Lord in the judgment, it cannot come out of Babylon, but will ſtill be entangled and held in ſome part or other of the myſtery of its deceit.

11. Such of the people of God as do not wait to underſtand and receive the full call, and ſo do not follow the Lord perfectly out of that city of abominations; but by her ſubtilties, and inward and outward witchcrafts, are held captive therein, and found in any part thereof when the Lord cometh to judge her; ſuch muſt partake of the plagues from the hand of the Lord, who will not ſpare her, nor the ſpirits of his deareſt people who are found there, in the day of his viſitation and righteous judgments.

Therefore come out of her, come out of her, O ye that love your ſouls, and the pure preſence and freſh light of God's countenance! Ye that know what it is to provoke him to jealouſy, and fear the weight of his hand upon your ſpirits; ye that love the holy land, the holy city, and temple of the living God, oh! come out of that impure building, that fleſhly building, thoſe fleſhly ways and worſhips which that ſpirit adorneth, to make them appear as if they were ſpiri-

tual. Oh! depart ye, depart ye, out of your new removes; for they are alſo polluted, and not your reſt; but ſhort of that wherein the reſt, the peace, the preſence of the Lord of life is felt by others, and to be found by you.

And conſider this, if ever ye will come to the holy city, which was once built in the days of the apoſtles, but (ſince the diviſion of it from the outward court) hath been trodden down, and trampled under the feet of the unbelievers, even while they have been worſhipping in the outward court (which God once built and choſe, but afterwards withdrew his Spirit from, and gave up to the unbelievers); I ſay, if ever you will come to this holy city, the holy land wherein it is built, and the holy hill whereon it was founded, ye muſt paſs through the wilderneſs, be exerciſed in the wilderneſs, even till ye are fitted for it; and not ſtrive to raiſe up a building yourſelves in the likeneſs of it; but wait till God hath hewn and prepared the ſtones by his Spirit, and then (by the ſkill of the Spirit) build up his Sion again.

Therefore, in the fear of the Lord, conſider ſeriouſly, meekly, humbly, and brokenly, that the Lord may manifeſt your preſent ſtate and condition unto you, whether ye have not erred in theſe things as well as others, and have not cauſe to repent of your forwardneſs herein, and to acknowledge that your buildings have been raiſed in the forwardneſs of your own ſpirits, and in the confidence of your reaſoning upon ſcripture-words, without feeling the preſence (guidance and holy power) of God's Spirit raiſing up the foundation of many generations, and rearing his own pure houſe upon his own holy mountain.

In the Lord's hand is the time and ſeaſon of building his own houſe. David, though his deſire was approved, yet might not build the outward temple in the time of his choice; but God's time and ſeaſon was to be waited for, both for the firſt building, and for the rebuilding of it. There is likewiſe a ſeaſon for the rebuilding of ſpiritual Sion, after the long captivity

vity of it in myſtery Babylon. Now he that is forward, building before the time and ſeaſon of the Spirit, buildeth without the Spirit, and his building is not of the Spirit, but of the nature of Babylon, which is wholly to be departed from, and left behind, in the ſoul's travels and progreſs towards Sion: and whatever is of the nature of Babylon, muſt at length fall with Babylon, (in the day of her terrible judgment) if the Lord in mercy do not ſhake it, and cauſe it to fall before.

Therefore, O all profeſſors! awake out of the fleſh, and all fleſhly reaſonings, into the Spirit of life; and examine there both your inward and outward buildings, that your loſs be not great, and your anguiſh unutterable in the day of the Lord, when all thoſe buildings, which are raiſed and preſerved in the pure life and power, ſhall ſhine in the beauty and glory of God's Spirit, and the greateſt glory of fleſh and fleſhly buildings fade and wither.

The SOUNDING of BOWELS towards thee, O ENGLAND!

EARLY in the morning, on the 26th day of the ſixth month, 1660, this, in the freſhneſs and quick ſenſe of life, ſprang up in my heart again and again. O England, England, England! how good had it been for thee, that thou hadſt known and walked in the way of peace!

There is a way of peace for perſons and nations to know and walk in; but every perſon and nation doth not know and walk in this way, but rather in the way of trouble.

Queſt. *What is the way of peace?*

Anſ. It is the way of the pure wiſdom, the way of the light and guidance of God's Spirit, from whom the creature came, and by whom alone it can be rightly ordered. He that waiteth on him for counſel, he that ſubjecteth to, and walketh in his counſel, he walketh in the way of peace.

Queſt. *What is the way of trouble?*

Anſ. The way of a man's own wiſdom and counſel. For a man or nation to do that which is right in their own eyes. This is the way of man, whereby he thinks to eſtabliſh himſelf, and put an end to his troubles; but he errs therein, as in the end he ſtill finds to his woe.

Now, O England! conſider; haſt thou the guidance of God? Hath the light which hath guided thy ſteps been lighted by him, or by his and thy ſoul's enemy? For there is a ſpirit (of a contrary nature to God) near man, which he ſuddenly taketh counſel of, when his heart is not acquainted with, nor receiveth counſel of the Lord. And this counſellor is the deſtroyer both of perſons and nations, leading them in ways of ruin and ſubverſion, under an appearance of being the proper ways of peace and ſettlement.

It is true of nations, as well as perſons, that what they ſow, that ſhall they alſo reap. God meaſureth out their time unto them, and when that is over, his time of judging and pleading with them comes. And woe is then unto them who have acted in their own wills and wiſdoms, out of the pure counſel and fear of the Lord, wherein they ſhould have ſtood and been guided.

It is a day of trouble and diſtreſs. The weight of the iniquity of this nation begins to be felt upon it. Oh! let every one ſearch and bow before the Lord, under his righteous judgments! that there may be no going on in that which bringeth and will increaſe the judgment; but a turning towards that which intercedes, and opens the ſprings of mercy.

Two things lie heavy on this nation; to wit, a running on in tranſgreſſions of ſeveral kinds againſt the Lord,

Lord, (forgetting his tender mercies, with the days of former diſtreſs) and an afflicting others whom he loves, and hath led, and is leading out of tranſgreſſion. Oh! that theſe things might come to an end, that the anger of the Lord might ceaſe, and the ways of his judgments and pleading with this nation be ſtopped; for who can ſtand before him when he riſeth up in controverſy againſt them?

There is but one eye which can rightly ſee the hand and judgments of the Lord; yea, it pleaſeth the Lord ſo to manage them, that only the eye which is of him may ſee them. Man muſt be taken in his wiſdom, and caught in the ſnare of his own underſtanding. He that will ſee the things of God, the ways of God, the counſels of God, the love and ſweetneſs of God, (yea, the very judgments of God) muſt receive from him the eye that ſeeth them. Oh! that men might feel after, and come into, that wherein they might be pitied, and ſpared by their Maker. Man muſt bow; that which is of God in man (which hath long lain under oppreſſion) muſt be exalted. It is the day of his power, and he will reign in it. Oh! happy they that bow to his ſcepter, and kiſs the ſhinings of his light, (even the ſharpeſt rebukes of it in their hearts) that they may turn from, and travel out of, the darkneſs, (where is death, deſtruction, and miſery, even in all the counſels and ways of it) and come into unity with that which is pure, and live.

Written in Ayleſbury
priſon, 27th of
6th month, 1666.

A faithful Guidance to the Principle and Path of Truth, wherein eternal Life is witneſſed, by thoſe who are born thereof, and walk therein.

THERE muſt be ſomewhat let down from God into a man's heart, to change his heart, and redeem it to God, or he cannot be ſaved. He muſt receive a ſeed, be born of a new and incorruptible ſeed, or he cannot be renewed from his corrupt nature and ſtate. He muſt be born of water and God's Spirit, or he cannot enter into God's kingdom.

Now this is the true religion; namely, to experience and be ſubject to that power which redeems to God; which breaks the power of the wicked-one in the heart, firſt caſting him out, and then taking poſſeſſion of the veſſel, and filling it with the holy treaſure.

Queſt. *But how may a man meet with ſuch a thing as this?*

Anſ. The ſcripture (which gives a faithful teſtimony concerning the truth) ſaith, Chriſt, the Word of faith, which the apoſtles preached, is nigh. Inſomuch as a man need not ſay, Who ſhall go up or down to fetch it? But what ſaith it? "The word is nigh thee, "in thy mouth, and in thy heart." This is that which reconciles to God, cutting down and ſlaying the enmity by the power of the croſs, and bringing up the ſeed. This is the adverſary in the way of the ſinner, which he that maketh peace with ſhall be remitted all his treſpaſſes paſt, and find power and ſtrength againſt ſin for the time to come, as he is gathered into, and brought forth in his pure life and nature.

Queſt.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I know and receive this?*

Anſ. That in the heart which is contrary to ſin, which diſcovereth ſin, which witneſſeth againſt ſin, and is drawing the mind from it, furniſhing thoſe with a new and holy ability, who wait upon the Lord in it; that, that is the thing, though in ever ſo little a ſeed or low meaſure. Now he that minds this, hearkens to this, turns from what this (in its pure unerring light) ſhews to be evil, follows (in the will, ſtrength, and ability which is of this) what this ſhews to be good, he receives it; and waiting upon it, and becoming daily ſubject to it, ſhall grow up in it, increaſe in the knowledge of it, and acquaintance with it, and receive of it daily more and more. And thus the man whoſe way was vile, whoſe heart was naught, formed in wickedneſs, filled with corruption, daily bringing forth ſin and fruits unto death, ſhall find theſe (by the pure light, and holy inſtructions of life) daily purged out of him, and Chriſt formed in him, and the holy fruits of righteouſneſs brought forth through his veſſel, by the power and Spirit of Chriſt, to the glory of God the Father.

And then being in Chriſt, being in the principle of his life, and acting therein, here is peace in the ſoul, reſt to it from its enemies and God's judgments, and acceptance with the Father in what the ſoul thus is and works.

But then the world will perſecute and hate exceedingly; becauſe this ſoul, who thus ſubmits to God, and is thus changed by him, is not of the world, but of the Father, which begat it in Chriſt, and formed it in his image and likeneſs.

Likewiſe in this light the eyes are opened to read the ſcriptures, and to underſtand therein the conditions of the people and ſaints of the Moſt High in former generations, and how the wicked ſpirit wrought then, to oppoſe the truth and people of God, and to draw men into deceit. Yea, and many other ways the ſcriptures are exceeding ſweet and uſeful, being read in that

that which gives the true ſenſe and underſtanding of them.

But let him that once putteth his hand to the plough (beginning to feel ſomewhat of God, and to ſubject unto it, and ſo to taſte of the peace and pureneſs of it) never look back to the world, nor mind the temptations and oppoſitions he will meet with from that nature and ſpirit, either in himſelf or others; for if he do, he will never be able to travel on, but rather conſult with fleſh and blood, and ſo return back into Egypt, and loſe the crown which is laid up for thoſe who paſs on through the wilderneſs, through the trials, through the temptations, through the wants, through the various exerciſes to their journey's end.

This is the path of life in brief; happy is he who feels the guider into it, and faithfully follows him therein to the end.

There is another queſtion ſprings up in my heart, which is this:

Queſt. *How may a man come to have his ſins waſhed away by the blood of Chriſt?*

Anſ. By coming into the light, and walking in the light, which diſcovers the blood, and wherein alone it is ſprinkled by God, and felt by the ſoul, he may receive the cleanſing which is by it. This is according to the teſtimony of ſcripture, as 1 John i. 7. "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we "have fellowſhip one with another, and the blood of "Jeſus Chriſt, his Son, cleanſeth us from all ſin." By the light the darkneſs is diſpelled, and in the light the corruption and filth is waſhed away by the blood, and the ſoul (mind and conſcience) cleanſed from it.

"This then is the meſſage that we have heard of "him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and "in him is no darkneſs at all," ver. 5. What then? Why then they that will know God, and walk with God, muſt by the virtue of his truth be turned from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan unto God (as Acts xxvi. 18.); and in that light he ſhall meet with the Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt,

and

and have fellowſhip with them, ver. 3. and ſhall be waſhed (both with the water and with the blood) and kept clean and pure thereby in the ſight of God.

Queſt. *But how ſhall I come into the light, and how may I walk therein?*

Anſ. Chriſt is the light. (He is the light of the world, the light of men, the light of life. And thou needſt not ſay in thine heart, Who ſhall go up to heaven, or down into the deep for him? For he is near, in thy mouth, and in thy heart. This is the word of faith, which thou art to believe in, love, and obey; that in the love, faith, and obedience thereof, thine heart may be circumciſed, and thou mayeſt live. This is the goſpel of our ſalvation, even this Chriſt, this word, this light, this life, which redeems from ſin, which deſtroyeth the deſtroyer, and ſetteth the ſoul free to ſerve and live to the Lord. This was the meſſage the apoſtles had to deliver in their day, as Rom. x. 8. And this was Moſes's meſſage too, when he ſpake concerning the new covenant. For Moſes did not only deliver the old covenant, but he alſo ſpake concerning the new, even another covenant than that of Mount Horeb, Deut. xxix. 1. And the word of this other covenant was not the law written in tables of ſtone; but the word nigh in the mouth and heart, chap. xxx. 14.

Object. *But that place ſpeaks of doing (which is the voice of the old covenant, do this and live); but the new covenant ſtands in believing.*

Anſ. The end of faith is obedience. Why do I believe Chriſt, but that I may receive the law of his Spirit, and walk before him in the newneſs of the obedience thereof? And he that obeys is of the faith, and in the truth; and he that obeys not, is out of it; is not in the power, not in the life, which brings forth the obedience; ſo out of the thing which redeems, and in which the redemption is witneſſed: but he that obeys, he that doth the will, he is in the righteouſneſs, in the power, in the life, from which the obedience ſprings.

And

And here the waſhing and purifying of the ſoul is truly known and witneſſed. Outward ſacrifices under the law were vain, as to cleanſing the ſoul; and an outward belief of what Chriſt did and ſuffered, effects not the thing now. What then? The new creature doth; the pure faith doth; the pure obedience doth. It did it formerly, it doth it ſtill, and nothing elſe can do it. "Bring no more vain oblations; but waſh ye, "make you clean; put away the evil of your doings "from before mine eyes; ceaſe to do evil, learn to "do well," &c. But how ſhould this be? Could they ever attain this by the old covenant? Nay; but Moſes had not only delivered them the old covenant, but alſo had directed them to the new, to the Word of faith, to the Word of life and power in the heart and mouth, through the obedience whereof they might waſh themſelves, (as Peter, even in the goſpel-times, ſpeaketh, 1 Pet. i. 22.) put away the evil of their doings; ceaſe to do evil, learn to do well, &c. And what then? Why then they ſhould receive the cleanſing through the blood of the Lamb; for then, though their ſins were as ſcarlet, they ſhould be as white as ſnow; though they were red like crimſon, they ſhould be as wool, Iſa. i. 16, 17, 18.

So Micah tells them, (when they aſked how they might come before God to pleaſe him?) "He hath "ſhewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth "the Lord require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to "love mercy, and to walk humbly with God," Mic. vi. 8. Where or how doth God ſhew this to man? Had not Moſes told that before; to wit, by the Word nigh in the mouth and heart? There is ſomewhat near man, even in his mouth, which divides his words one from another, ſhewing him (at ſome times, and would do it oftener if he heeded it) which are bad words, and which are good words. What is that that doth this? The ſame thing alſo is in his heart, as a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents thereof, ſhewing him when there is a good thought, deſire, or intention in his mind, and when there is a bad or wicked one.

one. What is this? Oh! that men knew what it is! Oh! that they could fear the Lord, and become ſubject to it, and they ſhould know what it is!

Every man that will be ſanctified, and inherit God's kingdom, muſt be born of the will of God. He muſt deny his own will, (as Chriſt did; not my will, ſaid he, Father, but thine be done) that muſt be crucified. He muſt ſuffer in the fleſh, die to the fleſh, and live in and to the holy nature and Spirit of God.

Now thus a man comes to be born of the pure will; to wit, by hearing the word nigh in the mouth and heart, and becoming ſubject to it. This cuts down his own will day by day, and brings up the will and nature of God in him, through which he is changed and ſanctified, and becomes a new creature. For the old creature is made up of the old underſtanding and will; but the new creature is made up of the new.

"Wherewithal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way? "By taking heed according to thy word," ſaid David. What word was that? Was it the word of the old covenant, or the word nigh in the mouth and heart? And "thy word," ſaith he, "is a lantern to "my feet, and a light to my path." What word was that, the word of the firſt covenant, or the word of the ſecond? "The law of the Lord is perfect, "converting the ſoul." What law is that? "The "teſtimony of the Lord is ſure, making wiſe the ſim-"ple." What teſtimony is that? "The ſtatutes of "the Lord are right, rejoicing the heart." What ſtatutes are they? (Were not the ſtatutes of the old covenant heavy and burdenſome?) "The command-"ment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the eyes." What commandment is that? Yea, what is that which is "ſweeter than the honey, and the honey-comb," which overcomes with ſweetneſs? Oh! that men could read! Oh! that men could ſee the thing which is pure, and maketh pure; which is righteous, and maketh righteous. After men have ſeen the thing, there is a great way to travel to it; but how far are they

they off, who do not ſo much as ſee it, but are in the darkneſs and prejudices of that nature and ſpirit which is contrary to it.

Now if the Lord, in his tender mercy and love to thy ſoul, bring thee to a ſenſe of this thing, and thou beginneſt to feel this precious ſearching word diſcovering any evil to thee, either in thy heart or ways, oh! do not diſpute, do not reaſon againſt it; but bleſs the diſcoverer, bow to the Son, become obedient immediately, faithfully following the Lamb therein, leſt he remove his light from thee, and ſuffer darkneſs and the diſputing wiſdom to overtake thee.

Chriſt is not of the world, and he leads out of the world; out of its vanities, ways, cuſtoms, faſhions, &c. A man cannot ſerve Chriſt and the world. Can any man be born of the Father, be begotten by him out of the ſpirit of the world, and yet live in that, walk in that, which is not of the Father, but of the world; which came from the worldly part, is of the worldly part, nouriſheth and pleaſeth the worldly part in man, but pleaſeth not the Father? Can that man who is not of the world, but of the Father, do any thing that upholdeth the luſt of the fleſh, the luſt of the eyes, or the pride of life, either in himſelf or others? Doth not the Spirit of the Lord, where it is hearkened to, draw out of theſe, and out of all things which are of theſe? Therefore conſider well what it will coſt, and how hard it is to follow Chriſt; that thou who deſireſt to be the Lord's, mayeſt receive help and ſtrength from him to be faithful, that in his ſtrength thou mayeſt overcome all that ſtands between thee and life, that ſo thou mayeſt receive the crown, and inherit the kingdom which is prepared for, and given to, the faithful, who labour and fight not in vain; but gain ground and conquer (yea, at length become more than conquerors) through the mercy, love, might, and power of the Lord.

Some

Some ſenſible experimental QUESTIONS and ANSWERS from the Tenth Chapter of JOHN.

Queſt. 1. *WHO is the good Shepherd of the ſheep?*
Anſ. The wiſdom, life, and power of the Father (which dwelleth in, and is manifeſt through the Son) is the Shepherd. He that is the truth, the way, and the life, he alſo is the Shepherd and Biſhop of the ſoul.

Queſt. 2. *Who are the ſheep?*

Anſ. They that are born of this wiſdom, gathered by this life, turned to this power, they are the ſheep. They who are changed by him into his nature, they are of him; ſheep of him, the Shepherd; lambs of him, the Lamb; doves of him, the Dove.

Queſt. 3. *What is the fold of the ſheep?*

Anſ. The wiſdom, life, and power of the Father, even the ſame that is the Shepherd. The Father's hand wherewith he covers them, wherein he incloſeth them, that is the fold. For it is the power, wiſdom, and life of the Father, which gathereth the ſheep; and he gathereth them into his wiſdom, into his life; and that is a wall or fold about them.

Object. *Is not the church the fold?*

Anſ. This in the church, or the church in this, is the fold; but not out of this. For there is no ſafety or preſervation among any ſort or gathering of people, but as they ſtand and abide in this. And ſtanding and abiding in this, they have authority and power from the chief Biſhop of the ſoul; but none out of this.

Queſt. 4. *Who is the door?*

Anſ. The Shepherd is the door alſo, who lets into the fold, and ſhuts out, at his pleaſure; and none can rightly enter but by him.

Queſt.

Queſt. 5. *What are they that run before the power, or farther than the power leads and guides them?*

Anſ. They are thieves and robbers, and they may deſtroy the life and freſhneſs in thoſe that are not watchful; but they cannot help to ſave or build up, becauſe they themſelves are out of that, come out of that, and act out of that, which alone can do it.

Queſt. 6. *How may the ſheep be diſcerned from the goats, and from ſuch alſo as put on the ſheep's clothing, but yet are not ſheep in nature and ſpirit?*

Anſ. By their lamb-like nature, by the meekneſs and innocency in them which is of the Lamb, which none can have but they that are of him; for it is not to be found in man's nature, nor to be attained by his art. They alſo know and hear the voice of the Word nigh in the mouth and heart, and follow the law of his Spirit, received from his mouth, which none elſe but his ſheep do, or can do; for this is given by him, and it is given by him only to his ſheep.

Queſt. 7. *What doth Chriſt the Shepherd (the eternal Word, the wiſdom, life, and power of the Father) do for his ſheep?*

Anſ. He doth great things for them, which who can utter? But happy is he that feels and knows them. He gives them a new nature, a new ſpirit, a new heart, a new name, which none knoweth but he that hath it; for it is written on the white ſtone, which none elſe receives, nor none elſe can read, but he that hath the eye which is of him, what is written thereon. He giveth them eternal life; he leadeth them into the paſtures of life; he giveth them to drink of the waters of life. He putteth them forth out of the priſon-houſe, out of the chains and fetters, out of the darkneſs, out of the bonds, and from under the burdens of the ſoul, into the pure light and liberty of the Spirit, where they taſte, know, and enjoy of his freedom, and dwell with him, and reſt with him, and lie down with him, and riſe up with him, even in the ſame eternal life, Spirit, and power, wherein his dwelling-place is. And all this they enjoy ſafely, hearkening

ing to the voice of the Shepherd, and turning from the voice of the ſtranger, which it is natural to them to do. For being turned from man, born of that which is immortal, and keeping to that; that ear which is there received will alone hearken to the voice of him who is immortal; and the voice of the ſtranger (who ſpeaketh of himſelf) is preſently diſcerned and turned from, by him that heareth with the true ear. *The Lord God, who is the ſpring and fountain of all good, inflame people with deſires after the pure life, and holy nature, which is of and from Chriſt the ſeed, his Son, and ſatisfy thoſe deſires which are ſingly and uprightly after him.*

THE

CONCLUSION.

GLORIOUS was the eſtate of the church before the apoſtaſy, for purity of doctrine, for holy order and diſcipline, for love to God, one to another, and to all men, (even of enemies) for faith in God, for the preſence and power of his Spirit among them, (inſomuch as the unbeliever coming among them, might find his heart and ſtate reached to, and be forced to confeſs and report that God was in them of a truth) for ſingleneſs and uprightneſs of heart, meekneſs and innocency of ſpirit and converſation, for zeal for God and his truth, ſuffering the ſpoiling of their goods, impriſonments, ſtripes, and many other ways, both from the heathen, and alſo from the profeſſing Jews, who had been the church once. Oh! what ſhall I ſay concerning the beauty and lovelineſs of that ſtate? Ye that would know it, oh! wait to feel it in that which gives the true ſenſe of it.

But over this glorious ſtate came a dark, thick, corrupt night, wherein the kernel was loſt, and the ſhell defaced; wherein the houſe, which had been ſwept and garniſhed, became again recovered and poſſeſſed by the wicked ſpirit. And how great hath this darkneſs been! Oh! what a kind of church hath appeared in the world, wherein the ſpirit of enmity hath dwelt and acted in men, under the name of Chriſtianity! So that inſtead of loving and ſeeking the good of enemies, they are ready to rend and tear one another for every little difference, and will be lords over mens faith, requiring men to practiſe things in religion before the Spirit of the Lord teacheth them ſo to do, which the apoſtles did not. For though they had from God the expreſs knowledge of what was truth, and could certainly inſtruct and build up men therein, yet they were not lords over mens faith; but if men were otherwiſe minded than according to what they knew and taught, they could wait and bear with them, bidding them walk ſo far as they had attained, and God in his due time would reveal the reſt alſo. Oh! that men were come to this ſpirit again! then they would be Chriſtians indeed, and then they might be known to be Chriſt's diſciples, by their loving the brethren and fellow-diſciples. But without this love, mens religion is but a tinkling cymbal, making a noiſe and ſound of ſomewhat, but not having the true nature or virtue of religion in it.

Now will it not be a glorious day, when the Spirit of the Lord cleanſeth away this thick darkneſs, and cauſeth the light of his pure truth to ariſe and appear again? Why there is ſuch a day to be, wherein the true church (which was reproached and driven into the wilderneſs) is to come out of the wilderneſs again, and her witneſſes ſtand on their feet again, and her ſeed to ſpring up in the power of life, following the Lamb, who marcheth on fighting with the ſword of the Spirit, (the word of his mouth) conquering and to conquer thereby the corrupted antichriſtian world, even as he did at firſt the corrupt heatheniſh world.

The

The Lord will purify his temple, and cleanſe the world by the plagues of his angels which he hath prepared, making way for the beauty of his truth, and the church of his gathering; wherein he will bring forth his righteouſneſs, wherein his power ſhall appear, wherein his preſence ſhall be made manifeſt, wherein that which ſhined before in the primitive church, ſhall ſhine again in this new-reared building of his, inſomuch as men ſhall be forced to ſay, *This is the church of Chriſt indeed, God is here of a truth; this is the Goſpel-Jeruſalem indeed, which is built upon the holy hill of Sion; in which innocency, righteouſneſs, truth, love, ſweetneſs, peaceableneſs, and the gentle nature and Spirit of the Lamb lives and reigns; and the Lord bleſs thee, O habitation of juſtice, and mountain of holineſs.*

Now of a truth this work is begun. The times of refreſhment are come from the preſence of the Lord. The Lord hath heard from heaven, pitying the cries of his ſeed, and hath viſited their ſouls, cauſing the light of life (even the pure light of the everlaſting covenant) to ſhine upon their tabernacles. But whoever would know theſe things, and partake of them, muſt come in at the door, by the guidance of the Spirit, through the light which is with him. And he that would enjoy the full light (even the ſhinings forth of the ſun at noon-day) muſt begin with its glimmerings, even that in the heart, which diſcovereth and draweth out of the corrupt ſtate of the world towards the Father. Oh! hear and live. Do not diſpute about it, but wait to feel it; upon the feeling of it, deſpiſing the ſhame, and taking up and enduring the croſs, and ſo bearing the reproach and ſufferings of Chriſt in thy age and generation. And as thou obeyeſt, thou ſhalt know of its doctrine; but out of the pure faith and obedience, there is no true, ſound, deep, rooted knowledge; but all of that kind muſt be parted with, for the knowledge which is of the faith, and which is made manifeſt and increaſed in the obedience; which knowledge is of a far more excellent kind and nature, than that which thou art to part with for it. The

Lord guide thy mind, and ſtretch forth his hand to help thee, who from the leaſt touch of a pure nature and ſpirit, deſireſt after the pure truth and way of eternal life. Amen.

This teſtimony (here held forth) is faithful and true, and (I know) the witneſs of God in many hearts will anſwer to it; and happy is he that maketh a right uſe of it. For, ſo doing, his ſoul will not fall ſhort of the pure living truth, nor ſet up any thing elſe for truth which is not.

To ſuch as are not ſatisfied with a Profeſſion, without the true Life and Power, but have ſincere Deſires in their Hearts after the LORD himſelf, and a Willingneſs to be acquainted with his pure living Truth, and with the Soul's true Guide and Leader; this Experience is in my Heart to expreſs unto you, which we have all along witneſſed in our Travels out of the dark corrupt Land, into the Land of Life and Purity.

WE have ſtill found the willer, the runner, the ſelf-ſtriver, the wiſe comprehending part, &c. left behind; and the grace of God alone able to lead towards him, and the birth which is of and by grace ſtill to obtain the mercy. And Chriſt is our life, and in the union with his Spirit lies all our ability and ſtrength; and that knowledge of Chriſt, which we witneſs to be life eternal, we did not meet with whilſt we thought to have it in the ſcriptures, but it hath been all along revealed to us by God's Spirit; ſo that we

we can truly ſay fleſh and blood did not reveal the Son to us, but the Father. Yet that which the ſcriptures teſtify concerning Chriſt is exactly true according as it is there related, and is ſo acknowledged and really owned by us; though we obtained not our knowledge of Chriſt by the letter, but by receiving a principle of life from God; and coming into union with his Spirit, we came to the true knowledge and owning of the letter; which as it came from the life, ſo can it only be rightly read and underſtood in the life from which it came: ſo that he that is out of that, cannot but err concerning the letter, and misjudge concerning the things of God; whereas he that is guided by, and lives in, God's Spirit, (receiving his knowledge there) cannot err concerning the Spirit, or concerning the letter; but hath that within him, which gives to him, and preſerves him in, the true ſenſe and underſtanding of both.

Now, friends, this is an excellent thing indeed, to come to, and be acquainted with, and receive that, which the ſcriptures teſtify of; to wit, to receive Chriſt, to feel union with him in his Spirit, to enter into the new and holy agreement with God, into the everlaſting covenant of life and peace, to feel the partition-wall broken down, and the wall of ſalvation reared up, and the defence which is thereby; to find the law of God, the law of life, the law of the new creation, written in the heart; the pure fear planted there by God, which keepeth the mind and ſpirit from departing from him; to have his Spirit put within, cauſing to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes, and judgments, and do them; and ſo to have union and fellowſhip with the Lord in that which is pure and living of him, in Chriſt the new and living way, which was before the fall, and leads the obedient out of the fall, even beyond Adam's ſtate, into himſelf who never fell, in whom is no ſin, nor erring, no not for the wayfaring man, though a fool, who often erred and wandered before he came thither; but there the Father's hand, even the hand of the eternal power,

is felt, which none can pluck out of. Oh! that ye knew the infallible leader, and were turned from darkneſs to the light, (and did believe therein) and from the power of Satan unto God, that ye through his Spirit might undeniably witneſs the myſteries of his kingdom, and partake of and enjoy that which his love, grace, and mercy, plentifully diſtributes among his children that wait upon him in one way, under the holy ordering of his Spirit; which was long harped at and longed after by many of us; but we could never meet with it, till the Lord in his mercy cauſed the light of his day to ſhine into our hearts, which chaſed away the darkneſs of the night, and made the things of the day manifeſt.

Are ye of the houſe of Jacob? Are ye of the right ſeed? Are ye of the true breathers after God's holineſs, after the life and righteouſneſs of his Sion? Oh! then come ye, know, acknowledge, receive, and wait to walk in the light of the Lord; and do not join to that in you which is ſeparated from, and knoweth not, the light of the Lord, but oppoſeth it. And, friends, I beſeech you, take heed in this point; for he that denieth, refuſeth, oppoſeth, ſpeaketh evil, or thinketh hardly of any thing that is indeed of Chriſt, doth it to Chriſt himſelf, in Chriſt's account, (that is, Chriſt looketh upon it as if he had denied him, refuſed him, oppoſed him, ſpoke evil of him, &c.) and it will be ſo laid to his charge in the day of the Lord. And indeed ſuch is my love to you, and ſuch my deſire after your eternal good and welfare, that I would not have you ſtumble at the light and power of life, which the Lord hath revealed and ſtretched out (in this day of his mercy) to gather and ſave with; but feel the gathering by it from all that ſcattereth from the Lord, with the preſervation which is thereby, and the effecting of that in your ſpirits which it is able to effect, as it comes to manifeſt itſelf unto you, and to put forth his ſtrength in you. So wait for the gathering unto the light, (the light of the everlaſting day of God) and into the power which is able to redeem and defend

defend the ſoul from all that is contrary to God. And when ye are there, be diligent and faithful to the Lord: and feel (oh! daily wait to feel from him) the unclothing of your ſpirits from all their own unrighteouſneſs; yea, from all their own righteouſneſs alſo, (which is but as filthy rags before the Lord, even of the ſame nature with the unrighteouſneſs) that ye may be clothed upon with the new and living garment, wherein there is neither ſpot nor wrinkle, nor any ſuch thing. For they that are of Chriſt, and in Chriſt, do as really put on the nature, the Spirit, the garment of the ſecond Adam, as ever they did put off the old garment, nature, and ſpirit.

This is from one, who uprightly and ſingly deſireth your union with the Lord in his pure truth and holy anointing, and your diſunion from all that is contrary to him.

ISAAC PENINGTON.

A QUERY added, with its ANSWER.

WHAT is the true confeſſion of Chriſt, even that confeſſion which ariſeth from the knowledge which is life eternal?

Anſ. Friends, I witneſs it to be this; A confeſſion of his nature, a confeſſion of his Spirit, a confeſſion of his life, a confeſſion of his power. To confeſs the preſent living appearance of Chriſt, that is to confeſs Chriſt. "Behold," ſaith he, "I ſtand at the door "and knock." He that heareth his voice, acknowledgeth him, letteth him in, ſubjecteth to his truth and Holy Spirit; he confeſſeth him. But, though a man ſhould acknowledge and confeſs all that is recorded in the ſcriptures concerning him; yet if he know not his knocks, ſo as to let him in, and become

ſubject to his power, he doth not confeſs Chriſt as he ought to do, and as God requireth of him. Oh! that ye could learn thus to know Chriſt, and thus to confeſs him! For until ye thus know him, ye cannot thus confeſs him! and your knees muſt firſt bow at his name, before your tongues can rightly confeſs him, to the glory of God the Father! For if ye will indeed glorify the Father, ye muſt bow to the Son, who is the light wherein God dwells, in the ſhinings whereof he appears to, and viſits the ſons of men. And as the Son himſelf is ſpiritual; ſo is the light wherewith he viſits dark man. His law is ſpiritual, able to convert the ſoul of any man in whoſe heart it is written, and to make wiſe (the moſt ſimple among men) unto ſalvation. For the law of God, writ in the heart, is from the covenant of life; and delivers and preſerves from the law of ſin and death, having the light, power, and Spirit of Chriſt in and with it, from whom it comes.

Now if ye will know theſe things clearly, certainly, and infallibly; wait to feel ſome touches, ſome drawings, ſome convictions of God's Spirit upon your hearts. And then diſpute not againſt them; but immediately become ſubject, ſo far as the light and drawings of the Father incline and lead the mind; and then ye ſhall ſee what he is that draws, and of what nature his drawings are. And if once ye come to feel the preciouſneſs of his ointment; and to partake of it, receiving it and following it, it will bring you into the pure virginity, which loves and longs after the name that anoints with the pure living oil.

Friends, I was once where ye now are; and in that day, I alſo (through error and miſtake) called the light wherewith Chriſt hath enlightened man, *natural*, as ye now do. But the Lord hath ſince ſhewed me, that it was not the true birth of life in me which ſo called it; and it is alſo manifeſted to me in his Spirit of truth, (which deceives not) that it is not the true birth in you, which ſo judges of it. Oh! that ye were born of the Spirit, and in it knew the names of the things

things from their nature, and might be taught of the Father to worſhip in the Son! which ye can never do, till ye come into the Son's light; and that is the Son's light, even that wherewith he hath enlightened men, that they might believe in the Father through him! The ſcriptures (or any words ſpoken or written) are not the light itſelf, but teſtimonies concerning the light. Now that which ye are to come into, and to dwell and abide in, is the light itſelf; which light was before any words that teſtify of it, and is the ſubſtance of all the ſhadows, and the end of all the teſtimonies concerning it. He is *Alpha* and *Omega*, the Beginning and the End of the new creation of God. Oh! that ye ſo knew him!

That from which the ſcriptures came, is the thing, the life, the Spirit, the power itſelf; which is able to write inwardly, as well as outwardly. And he that knows the thing, and is led to the thing by the inward writing, (which is the teſtimony of Jeſus, the Spirit of prophecy) he by the teſtimony of Jeſus, by the Spirit of prophecy, is led to the Holy Power; which he believing in, it prevails to ſave him out of the contrary ſpirit and power. And this the Gentiles without the law, the Jews under the law, and the believers under grace, had ſpiritually all one and the ſame way and path of life unto ſalvation; and God will be clear and juſt in judging them all according thereunto, who had all ſome manifeſtation of the goſpel and power which ſaves, according to the diſpenſation of the good pleaſure of the free giver. And mens periſhing in the time of every diſpenſation, is not for want of light and power from God, but from mens withdrawing and apoſtatizing from the light and power, which in every diſpenſation of life ſtretched forth its hand and arm ſufficiently to gather and ſave.

There is ONE THING *more in my* HEART *unto You, at this Time, which is*

Concerning applying the PROMISES.

THE Promiſes of God are great and precious, and give to partake of the divine nature thoſe that wait upon the Lord in the faith and obedience of his truth. Now there are eſtates and conditions to which they do belong; and there are eſtates and conditions to which they do not belong: and if any one apply any promiſe to himſelf, he not being in that eſtate and condition to which that promiſe belongs, he deceives his ſoul, and ſucks not in the true ſweetneſs and comfort of the promiſe, but of his own imaginary apprehenſions concerning the promiſe.

There is a ſtate of wounding, of judging, of God's pleading with the ſoul, becauſe of ſin and tranſgreſſion. Now he that breaks and wounds, he alone can bind up and heal; and the Lord is to be waited upon in the way of his judgments, until he ſee meet to bind up and heal. Now the Lord heals by the ſame Spirit and power wherewith he wounds; but it is hard to lie under the judgment, to bear the indignation of the Lord, and ſo keep the wound (which he makes) open, till he pour in the oil, and heal. For there is that near, which will be offering to heal before the ſeaſon, and will be bringing in promiſes, and applying promiſes, otherwiſe than the Spirit of the Lord intendeth or applieth them. Now this is diligently to be watched againſt, that the hurt of the ſoul (judged and wounded by the Spirit of the Lord) be not healed ſlightly, and peace ſpoken to it (and an expectation and hope raiſed in it) which is not of the Lord. But this is the right way, even to give up to feel that which

which wounds, and to receive the woundings of thy ſoul's friend, and lie low before him in the wounded ſtate, waiting upon him in the way of his judgments and righteous indignation; till the ſame that wounded, ſpeak peace. For the ſame is to ſpeak peace, and not another; "I the Lord wound, and I heal; I kill, and "I make alive." Judgment is mine, and mercy is "mine; and they both iſſue from my lips." (See Iſa. xii. 1.) So every one, that would not be deceived about, nor miſapply the promiſes, wait to feel that in you, which leads into the condition to which the promiſe belongs, and to be led into and kept in the condition by it. And then, the ſame that leads into the condition, will apply the promiſe to him who is in the condition, the ear being open to him, hearkening to the Lord, waiting what he will ſpeak, who ſpeaks peace to his people in his ſeaſons; and having the ear ſhut againſt the voice of the unrighteous troubler of the ſouls of God's heritage. Yea, he that applieth the promiſes to the ſoul, (having brought it into the ſtate to which they belong) he alſo will lead and bring unto the fulfilling of the promiſes, even to the receiving of the good things promiſed and waited for; ſo that the ſoul ſhall witneſs the goſpel to be a glorious ſtate indeed; a ſtate of life, a ſtate of liberty, a ſtate of power, a ſtate of dominion, a ſtate of holineſs, a kingdom of righteouſneſs and peace, wherein there are everlaſting manſions and dwelling-places in Chriſt Jeſus, for the ſeed of the righteous for evermore. The Lord God of everlaſting mercy, life, power, and rich goodneſs, cauſe the light of his own Holy Spirit to ſhine into your hearts, guide you thereby into and in the true way, even in the pure living path, (which was and is but one for ever) that ye may come into the true poſſeſſion, and full enjoyment, and infallible witneſſing of theſe things.

23d of the Second month, 1668.

There

There is another QUERY, of great Concernment, which ſpringeth up in my Heart towards you.

Query. IS not the Spirit, or anointing, the great goſpel-promiſe, and the great goſpel-ordinance? Is not he *truth, and no lie*, and the leader out of all lies and deceits into the truth, and the preſerver of the mind and ſpirit therein? "Little children," ſaid the ſame apoſtle, who had directed to the anointing, "keep yourſelves from idols." Is there any poſſibility of being kept from images and idols, but by him? Can any underſtand the things of the Spirit, or the words ſpoken by the Spirit concerning ſpiritual things, but by him? And then, is not every apprehenſion, that ye take up from the ſcriptures concerning ſpiritual things, which ye have not from him, (but comprehend and gather of yourſelves) an image, or conceiving of your own, concerning that thing, and not that true knowledge and underſtanding of the thing which he alone can give? Oh! that all the chambers of imagery were thrown down in you, and every idol of the heart and mind diſcovered to you, and broken down by the light and power of the Lord; that ye might come to that which is pure and living, and by its purifying know the pure heart, the pure mind, the pure conſcience, and offer up the pure perfect offering; not the lame, blind, imperfect, &c. which were not accepted (in the figure) under the law, nor acceptable under the goſpel, Mal. i. 11. 13. and chap. iii. 3.

Friends, ye muſt know that which is pure from God, and ye muſt come into it (out of that which is impure, into that which is pure). Now that ye may do ſo, ye muſt know the purifying; for nothing that is impure, can enter into that which is pure. Yea,

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ye muſt become prieſts to God, and wear the prieſt's garment, the pure garment, the living garment, the fine linen, without mixture of the woollen. Ye muſt be born of the innocency, be clothed with the innocency. The ſtony, hard, deſperately-wicked heart muſt be taken away, and the tender heart of fleſh received, the mind renewed to God, the fear put within, (which cleanſeth and keepeth clean) the law writ within, the Spirit of the Lord put in the inward parts, and felt powerfully operating and changing there. Yea, and the inſide muſt not only be clean, but the outſide alſo; for ye muſt be clothed with the Spirit, clothed with the Lamb's righteouſneſs and holineſs; and thus ye muſt appear before the Lord in his temple, which is the beauty of holineſs, whoſe houſe holineſs becomes for ever; where ye are never to appear in your own filthy rags, but in the nature, Spirit, righteouſneſs, and life of Chriſt. And thus ye are well-pleaſing to God, even in that which is of God; being born of that, formed of that, found in that, appearing in that. But in his own, no man can be accepted; for it is determined of God, and ſtands irreverſible for ever, that in his own (in his own knowledge, in his own faith, in his own obedience, in his own righteouſneſs, in his own willing and running, &c.) ſhall no fleſh for ever be juſtified in his ſight; but only and alone in the nature, Spirit, life, righteouſneſs, faith, obedience, and holineſs of his Son. Therefore wait for the ſeed, that ye may know the ſeed, feel the ſeed, the pure ſeed of life, (the leaven of the heavenly kingdom) and may witneſs it ariſing and come in you to do the will, and you in it quickened and enabled to live to and ſerve the living God. And when ye know this ſeed, ye know Chriſt; and when ye receive this ſeed, ye receive Chriſt; and if it live in you, Chriſt lives in you; and in it (being in it, and abiding in it) are ye heirs of the life, kingdom, and power, which hath no end; and ſhall daily feel the promiſes and bleſſings belonging to the ſeed, flowing in upon your ſpirits. But if ye content your-

ſelves

ſelves with the knowledge of Chriſt, which the erring and apoſtatiſed ſpirit of man from the life and power may gather out of the letter of the ſcriptures, and feed thereon; that will not nouriſh you up to eternal life, but death and ſin, and the gates of hell will have power over you notwithſtanding that; but if ye, through the Spirit, receive power over that which is contrary to God, and through him mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live. Therefore wait for the manifeſtation of the pure power of the endleſs life, which is now diſpenſed from on high, (bleſſed be the name of the living one) and wait to know and be joined to that ſeed of life, wherein and whereby it is diſpenſed, that ye may witneſs Chriſt's kingdom come to you, and the reign of your ſpirits with him therein, over all that captivateth from him, loadeth the ſoul, boweth down and oppreſſeth.

A

POSTSCRIPT,

Concerning DECEIT, and being DECEIVED.

THERE is that which deceives, (where it is hearkened to) and there is that which is liable to be deceived by it. There is likewiſe that which deceiveth not; and there is alſo that which cannot be deceived. So likewiſe there is a pure fear and watching in the truth againſt the deceit, leſt by any means it ſhould enter and betray. As alſo there is a fear that is a ſnare, (which the true faith preſerves out of) whereby many are entangled in the very bowels of deceit, even concerning thoſe very things about which they

they are afraid they ſhould be deceived. This hath been experienced by thoſe, who have been acquainted with the Lord's precious truth, and thereby are come to know and diſcern the wiles and devices of Satan; who often hath quenched what the Lord hath kindled, by his ſtirring up a fear, leſt it ſhould not be of the Lord, but from the ſpirit of deceit.

It is true, that in the apoſtaſy from the life and Spirit of truth, deceit did generally prevail and overwhelm the minds of people. And ſo far as people are yet in the apoſtaſy, (not being gathered and redeemed out of it, by the Spirit and power of the Lord) they are yet under deceit; though perhaps they little think ſo. Little did we think formerly, (and little do they think now, who are now in that ſtate we were then in) that while we ſo much feared being deceived, we were already deceived, being ſhort of the life and power of truth, which alone is able to make free and preſerve from deceit. When the Lord cometh to bring to the primitive light and principle, that he might perfectly deliver out of deceit; what can the enemy do more advantageouſly towards keeping his hold in the mind, (and towards keeping the mind in the deceits wherein he hath already entangled it) than to ſtir up and heighten a fear in it, leſt the precious truth, which God maketh manifeſt to deliver the ſoul by, ſhould be deceit? And they that hearken to and let in the voice of the deceiver, muſt needs believe it to be ſo. And thus with them light cometh to be called darkneſs, and darkneſs light. Yea, who is it, at this day, who eſcapeth this ſnare, of calling evil good, and good evil? Surely none but he, whoſe ſoul is led into and lives in the light and power of truth.

For moſt men take up principles, (according to their own, or other mens underſtanding of the ſcriptures) and judge according to thoſe principles; and ſo the Spirit and light of the Lord judgeth not in them, but they themſelves judge according to an aſſumed knowledge. So that fleſh is not ſilent, the

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man is not dead in them and brought to nothing, but only lives in an higher region than he did before. Before, he lived in an apparent unrighteouſneſs; now he lives in an imagined righteouſneſs and faith; but not in the Son's righteouſneſs, not in the Son's faith, not in the Son's power, not in the Son's dominion; but at beſt only in that which he apprehendeth and ſtrongly imagineth to be ſo.

Oh! happy is he, who is come through all his own imaginings and conceivings about the things of God, and his own apprehenſions about ſcriptures and promiſes, and is come into the thing itſelf, into the Spirit of life, (into the truth and into the power) and who walks with God therein, daily witneſſing the redemption which is of him through his Son Jeſus Chriſt, who is known and partook of in the pure quickening Spirit, and not otherwiſe. And he that is truly begotten of God, and dwells with him in the light which is eternal, knows that he is of God; which others may ſtrongly imagine they are, but none elſe can truly know it, but may eaſily err and be entangled in the deceits of the enemy, (about the new birth, and other weighty things) while they are greatly afraid of being deceived by him, and ſo (through that fear) fly the pure truth, which frees from deceits, leſt it ſhould deceive them.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT of my Soul's Travel towards the Holy Land, and how at Length it pleaſed the LORD to join my Heart to his pure, holy, living Truth; wherein I have witneſſed the New Covenant, and Peace with the Lord therein. With a few Words concerning the Way of Knowing and Receiving the Truth: which is not done by Diſputes and Reaſonings of the Mind about it; but in waiting aright for the Demonſtration and Power of GOD'S Spirit to open the Heart and Underſtanding, and by ſubmiſſive Obedience to it, even in its loweſt Appearances in the inward Parts.

MY heart from my childhood was pointed towards the Lord, whom I feared and longed after from my tender years; wherein I felt, that I could not be ſatisfied with (nor indeed ſeek after) the things of this periſhing world, which naturally paſs away; but I deſired true ſenſe of, and unity with, that which abideth for ever. There was ſomewhat indeed then ſtill within me (even the ſeed of eternity) which leavened and balanced my ſpirit almoſt continually; but I knew it not diſtinctly, ſo as to turn to it, and give up to it, entirely and underſtandingly. In this temper of mind I earneſtly ſought after the Lord, applying myſelf to hear ſermons, and read the beſt books I could meet with, but eſpecially the ſcriptures, which were very ſweet and ſavoury to me; yea, I very earneſtly deſired and preſſed after the knowledge of the

ſcriptures, but was much afraid of receiving mens interpretations of them, or of faſtening any interpretation upon them myſelf; but waited much, and prayed much, that from the Spirit of the Lord I might receive the true underſtanding of them, and that he would chiefly endue me with that knowledge, which I might feel ſanctifying and ſaving. And indeed I did ſenſibly receive of his love, of his mercy, and of his grace, which I felt ſtill freely to move towards me, and at ſeaſons when I was moſt filled with the ſenſe of my own unworthineſs, and had leaſt expectations of the manifeſtation of them. But I was exceedingly entangled about election and reprobation, (having drunk in that doctrine, according as it was then held forth by the ſtricteſt of thoſe that were termed Puritans, and as then ſeemed to be very manifeſt and poſitive from Rom. ix. &c.) fearing leſt, notwithſtanding all my deſires and ſeekings after the Lord, he might in his decree have paſſed me by; and I felt it would be bitter to me to bear his wrath, and be ſeparated from his love for evermore; yet, if he had ſo decreed, it would be, and I ſhould (notwithſtanding theſe fair beginnings and hopes) fall away and periſh at the laſt. In this great trouble and grief, (which was much added to by not finding the Spirit of God ſo in me and with me, as I had read and believed the former Chriſtians had it) and in mourning over and grapling with ſecret corruptions and temptations, I ſpent many years, and fell into great weakneſs of body; and often caſting myſelf upon my bed, did wring my hands and weep bitterly, begging earneſtly of the Lord, daily, that I might be pitied by him, and helped againſt my enemies, and be made conformable to the image of his Son, by his own renewing power. And indeed at laſt (when my nature was almoſt ſpent, and the pit of deſpair was even cloſing its mouth upon me) mercy ſprang, and deliverance came, and the Lord my God owned me, and ſealed his love unto me, and light ſprang within me, which made not only the ſcriptures, but the very outward

creatures

creatures glorious in my eye, ſo that every thing was ſweet and pleaſant and lightſome round about me. But I ſoon felt, that this eſtate was too high and glorious for me, and I was not able to abide in it, it ſo overcame my natural ſpirits; wherefore, bleſſing the name of the Lord for his great goodneſs to me, I prayed unto him to take that from me which I was not able to bear, and to give me ſuch a proportion of his light and preſence, as was ſuitable to my preſent ſtate, and might fit me for his ſervice. Whereupon this was preſently removed from me; yet a ſavour remained with me, wherein I had ſweetneſs, and comfort, and refreſhment for a long ſeaſon. But my mind did not then know how to turn to and dwell with that which gave me the ſavour, nor rightly to read what God did daily write in my heart, which ſufficiently manifeſted itſelf to be of him, by its living virtue and pure operation upon me; but I looked upon the ſcriptures to be my rule, and ſo would weigh the inward appearances of God to me by what was outwardly written, and durſt not receive any thing from God immediately, as it ſprang from the fountain, but only in that mediate way. Herein did I limit the Holy One of Iſrael, and exceedingly hurt my own ſoul, as I afterwards felt and came to underſtand. Yet the Lord was tender to me, and condeſcended exceedingly, opening ſcriptures to me, freſhly every day, teaching and inſtructing, warming and comforting my heart thereby; and truly he did help me to pray, and to believe, and to love him and his appearances in any; yea, to love all the ſons of men, and all his creatures, with a true love. But that in me which knew not the appearances of the Lord in my ſpirit, but would limit him to words of ſcriptures formerly written, that proceeded yet further, and would be raiſing a fabrick of knowledge out of the ſcriptures, and gathering a perfect rule (as I thought) concerning my heart, my words, my ways, my worſhip; and according to what I thus drank in (after this manner, from the ſcriptures) I practiſed, and with much ſerioufneſs

of ſpirit and prayer to God fell a helping to build up an Independent congregation, wherein the ſavour of life and the preſence of God was freſh with me, as I believe there are yet ſome alive of that congregation can teſtify.

This was my ſtate, when I was ſmitten, broken, and diſtreſſed by the Lord, confounded in my worſhip, confounded in my knowledge, ſtripped of all in one day, (which it is hard to utter) and was matter of amazement to all that beheld me. I lay open and naked to all that would inquire of me, and ſtrive to ſearch out what might be the cauſe the Lord ſhould deal ſo with me. They would at firſt be jealous that I had ſinned and provoked him ſo to do; but when they had ſcanned things thoroughly, and I had opened my heart nakedly to them, I do not remember any one that ever retained that ſenſe concerning me. My ſoul remembereth the wormwood and gall, the exceeding bitterneſs of that ſtate, and is ſtill humbled in me in the remembrance of it before the Lord. Oh! how did I wiſh with Job, that I might come before him, and bowingly plead with him; for indeed I had no ſenſe of any guilt upon me, but was ſick of love towards him, and as one violently rent from the boſom of his beloved! Oh! how gladly would I have met with death! For I was weary all the day long, and afraid of the night, and weary alſo of the night-ſeaſon, and afraid of the enſuing day. I remember my grievous and bitter mournings to the Lord; how often did I ſay, *O Lord, why haſt thou forſaken me? Why haſt thou broken me to pieces? I had no delight but thee, no deſire after any but thee. My heart was bent wholly to ſerve thee, and thou haſt even fitted me* (as appeared to my ſenſe) *by many deep exerciſes and experiences for thy ſervice; why doſt thou make me thus miſerable?* Sometimes I would caſt mine eye upon a ſcripture, and my heart would even melt within me; at other times I would deſire to pray to my God, as I had formerly done; but I found I knew him not, and I could not tell how to pray, or in any wiſe to come near him, as I had

had formerly done. In this condition I wandered up and down from mountain to hill, from one ſort to another, with a cry in my ſpirit, *Can ye tell news of my beloved? Where doth he dwell? Where doth he appear?* But their voices were ſtill ſtrange to me, and I ſhould retire ſad and oppreſſed, and bowed down in ſpirit, from them.

Now ſurely, all ſerious, ſober, ſenſible people, will be ready to inquire, how I came ſatisfyingly to know the Lord at length; or whether I do yet certainly know him, and am yet truly ſatisfied?

Yes indeed, I am ſatisfied at my very heart. Truly my heart is united to him whom I longed after, in an everlaſting covenant of pure life and peace.

Well then, how came this about? will ſome ſay.

Why thus. The Lord opened my ſpirit, the Lord gave me the certain and ſenſible feeling of the pure ſeed, which had been with me from the beginning; the Lord cauſed his holy power to fall upon me, and gave me ſuch an inward demonſtration and feeling of the ſeed of life, that I cried out in my ſpirit, *This is he, this is he; there is not another, there never was another. He was always near me, though I knew him not* (not ſo ſenſibly, not ſo diſtinctly, as now he was revealed in me and to me by the Father); *Oh! that I might now be joined to him, and he alone might live in me.* And ſo in the willingneſs which God had wrought in me, (in this day of his power to my ſoul) I gave up to be inſtructed, exerciſed, and led by him, in the waiting for and feeling of his holy ſeed, that all might be wrought out of me which could not live with the ſeed, but would be hindering the dwelling and reigning of the ſeed in me, while it remained and had power. And ſo I have gone through a ſore travail, and fight of afflictions and temptations, of many kinds; wherein the Lord hath been merciful to me in helping me, and preſerving the ſpark of life in me, in the midſt of many things which had befallen me, whoſe nature tended to quench and extinguiſh it.

Now thus having met with the true way, and walked with the Lord therein, wherein daily certainty, yea, and full assurance of faith and of understanding is at length obtained; I cannot be silent, (true love and pure life stirring in me and moving me) but am necessitated to testify of it to others; and this is it, To retire inwardly, and wait to feel somewhat of the Lord, somewhat of his Holy Spirit and power, discovering and drawing from that which is contrary to him, and into his holy nature and heavenly image. And then, as the mind is joined to this, somewhat is received, some true life, some true light, some true discerning; which the creature not exceeding (but abiding in the measure of) is safe; but it is easy erring from this, but hard abiding with it, and not going before its leadings. But he that feels life, and begins in life, doth he not begin safely? And he that waits, and fears, and goes on no further than his Captain goes before him, doth he not proceed safely? Yea, very safely, even till he cometh to be so settled and established in the virtue, demonstration, and power of truth, as nothing can prevail to shake him. Now, blessed be the Lord, there are many at this day, who can truly and faithfully witness, that they have been brought by the Lord to this state. And thus have we learned of the Lord; to wit, not by the high, striving, aspiring mind; but by lying low, and being contented with a little. If but a crumb of bread, (yet if bread) if but a drop of water, (yet if water) we have been contented with it, and also thankful to the Lord for it; nor by thoughtfulness, and wise searching and deep considering with our own wisdom and reason have we obtained it; but in the still, meek, and humble waiting, have we found that brought into the death, which is not to know the mysteries of God's kingdom, and that which is to live, made alive and increase in life.

Therefore he that would truly know the Lord, let him take heed of his own reason and understanding. I tried this way very far; for I considered most seriously

ouſly and uprightly; I prayed, I read the ſcriptures, I earneſtly deſired to underſtand and find out whether that, which this people, called QUAKERS, teſtified of, was the only way and truth of God (as they ſeemed to me but to pretend); but, for all this, prejudices multiplied upon me, and ſtrong reaſonings againſt them, which appeared to me as unanſwerable. But when the Lord revealed his ſeed in me, and touched my heart therewith, which adminiſtered true life and virtue to me, I preſently felt them there the children of the Moſt High, and ſo grown up in his life, power, and holy dominion, (as the inward eye, being opened by the Lord, ſees) as drew forth from me great reverence of heart, and praiſes to the Lord, who had ſo appeared among men in theſe latter days. And as God draweth, in any reſpect, oh! give up in faithfulneſs to him! Deſpiſe the ſhame, take up the croſs; for indeed it is a way which is very croſs to man, and which his wiſdom will exceedingly be aſhamed of; but that muſt be denied and turned from, and the ſecret ſenſible drawings of God's Spirit waited for and given up to. Mind, people: He that will come into the new covenant, muſt come into the obedience of it. The light of life, which God hath hid in the heart, is the covenant; and from this covenant God doth not give knowledge to ſatisfy the vaſt, aſpiring, comprehending wiſdom of man; but living knowledge, to feed that which is quickened by him; which knowledge is given in the obedience, and is very ſweet and precious to the ſtate of him that knows how to feed upon it. Yea, truly, this is of a very excellent, pure, precious nature, and a little of it weighs down that great vaſt knowledge in the comprehending part, which the man's ſpirit and nature ſo much prizeth and preſſeth after. And truly, friends, I witneſs at this day a great difference between the ſweetneſs of comprehending the knowledge of things, as expreſſed in the ſcriptures, (this I fed much on formerly) and taſting the hidden life, the hidden manna in the heart (which is my food now, bleſſed for ever be the Lord

my God and Saviour). Oh! that others had a true, certain, and ſenſible taſte of the life, virtue, and goodneſs of the Lord, as it is revealed there! Surely, it could not but kindle the true hunger, and inflame the true thirſt; which can never be ſatisfied but by the true bread, and by water from the living fountain. This the Lord (in the tenderneſs of his love, and in the riches of his grace and mercy) hath brought us to; and this we earneſtly and uprightly deſire and endeavour, that others may be brought to alſo; that they may rightly (in the true ſilence of the fleſh, and in the pure ſtillneſs of ſpirit) wait for, and in the Lord's due time receive, that which anſwers the deſire of the awakened mind and ſoul, and ſatisfies it with the true precious ſubſtance for evermore, *Amen*.

SOME

SOME

THINGS

RELATING TO

RELIGION,

PROPOSED TO THE CONSIDERATION OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY,

SO TERMED;

TO WIT,

Concerning the right Ground of Certainty therein.
Concerning Tenderneſs of Spirit, and Perſecution.
A Query concerning Separation.

Concerning Waſhing away Sin from the Conſcience; and the Garment of Salvation, and what it is that is covered therewith.

LIKEWISE,

Some QUESTIONS and ANSWERS, concerning the Church of the New Covenant, the Rock or Foundation whereon it is built, and its Preſervation by and upon the Rock.

WITH

Some QUERIES concerning the ſcattered and hidden Eſtate of the Church; and concerning that Church which got up in the View of the World, inſtead thereof; and was acknowledged by the World as if ſhe had been the True Church; though in Deed and Truth ſhe was not ſo.

Whereunto are added,

Some QUERIES to PROFESSORS, who ſpeak of high Attainments, &c.

Written by one, whom it hath pleaſed the Lord (of his great Goodneſs, and tender Mercy) to lead out of the Darkneſs, into his marvellous Light; known among Men by the Name of

ISAAC PENINGTON.

TO THE

ROYAL SOCIETY,

SO TERMED.

FRIENDS,

I HAVE heard that ye are ſeeking after the excellency of nature and learning. I am not for diſcouraging any man, in endeavouring after that which is good, uſeful, and excellent in its kind and place; but it is the advantage of every thing, to know and abide in its place; and to honour and ſerve him, from whom all good gifts and endowments come. Man hath but a moment in this world, and he is here no more; and then the "ſpirit returneth to God that "gave it," to give an account of the talent which he gave it, and its improvement thereof, to the glory of him that gave it, and to the ſalvation of its own ſoul. Now, this talent is of an higher kind than nature, and will lead higher than nature; giving a man to partake of that wiſdom from which nature came; and teaching him to order all that is natural to its right end. For God is not an enemy to nature, but to the corruption and diſorder of nature. I deſire ye might know and partake of the true wiſdom, and feel union with God in the principle of his own life; and the incorruptible and heavenly ſeed of God receive dominion over the earthly and corruptible. For this end ſingly, in the love ſpringing up in my heart towards you, (as it often doth, both towards particular perſons

ſons and ſocieties; for I am a friend to all, and a lover of all; ſincerely deſiring the good of all, and the right guidance of their ſouls to happineſs) have I propoſed theſe things following more particularly to your view, though they concern others alſo, that ye thereby might be awakened to ſearch after that which is moſt excellent in you, and be acquainted with the virtue and precious effects thereof, to the full ſatisfaction and complete joy of your ſouls, in that which alone is able fully to ſatisfy, and give them ground of durable joy and rejoicing, in that which is not of a periſhing nature; but which was, and is, and will be the ſame for ever.

From a friend to the everlaſting peace of your ſouls, and a deſirer of your welfare and proſperity in this world,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

SOME THINGS RELATING TO RELIGION, &c.

Of Certainty, and rightly-grounded Aſſurance, in Matters of RELIGION.

THERE is a witneſs of and from God in every conſcience; which, in his light, power, and authority, witneſſeth for him, and againſt that which is contrary to him, as he pleaſeth to move upon it, viſiting and drawing the hearts of the ſons of men by it.

From this witneſs proceeds the true and well-grounded religion in the mind towards God: for this witneſs both teſtifieth and demonſtrateth that there is a God, and alſo inclineth the mind to deſire and ſeek after the right knowledge and true worſhip of him.

And ſuch who keep to this witneſs, and wait upon God therein, are taught by it the true ſpiritual worſhip; the true and pure fear of the Moſt High; the faith which he giveth to his ſaints; the love which is chaſte and unfeigned; the hope which purifieth the mind, and anchors it on the eternal rock; the meekneſs, patience, gentleneſs, humility, &c. which is not of man's nature, but the gift of God, and the nature of the heavenly Giver.

And

And then for exercises of religion, as praying to the Father of spirits, hearing the heavenly voice, reading in the Spirit, and with the renewed understanding, singing and making melody in the heart (and also with the voice) to the Lord, as his life is felt, and the spiritual blessings and treasure received; all these, and whatever else is judged necessary for the soul, are taught by this witness of God in the conscience, as the soul groweth up in the light, Spirit, nature, and holy power thereof.

But now, when the Lord reacheth to his witness in men, and is teaching their hearts by it, then the enemy, the other spirit, whose seat is in the other part, keepeth a noise there, to overbear the voice of the witness, and to make men take up religion in another part, which is shallow, and reacheth not to the depth and weight of truth, which is in the witness of God, and which the witness of God gives to them that come thither.

Thus the enemy stirreth up reasonings, imaginations, and consultations about God, and his worship; wherein he raiseth up the vain shallow mind, forging and bringing forth somewhat pleasing and suitable to the earthly understanding; taking up the mind therewith, and engaging the heart in some such practices therefrom, as may quiet and satisfy that part in men. For the ways that men take up in their reasonings and understandings, satisfy their reasonings and understandings; and so they walk in the light of the sparks, and warm themselves by the fire of their own kindling; but all this answers not the witness of God in them, nor will be approved by his light in their own consciences, when it comes again to be revealed and made manifest in them.

This was the ground of the error both of the Jews and Gentiles.

The Gentiles were enlightened by God with his true light; what might be known of God (suitable to their state and capacity) being manifested in them; insomuch as it is witnessed concerning them in the scrip-

ſcriptures (which are a true record and teſtimony) that they knew God. But when they knew him, they glorified him not as God, but became vain in their imaginations, and ſo their fooliſh heart was darkened concerning him: and they worſhipped him not as the witneſs taught them he was to be worſhipped, not according to the manifeſtation of his light in them; but according to their own fooliſh imaginations and reaſonings, which taught them to make images of him, and ſo to worſhip him in and through creatures, according to their own inventions; which is not the true worſhip, Rom. i. 21, 22, 23.

So likewiſe the Jews, not keeping to the manifeſtation of his light within them, (to the word or commandment nigh in the mouth and heart, to which Moſes directed them) which would have taught and enabled them to have kept to the law of the letter without them; they alſo ran into the nature and ſpirit of the heathen, and fell into imaginings and reaſonings, which led them to worſhip like them; inſomuch that they alſo changed their glory into the image of an ox that eateth graſs, Pſ. cvi. 20.

Now from this part in man ariſeth all the uncertainty, and doubts, and diſſatisfaction about religion. And hence ariſe the opinions, and judgments, and reaſonings, in the minds of men: yea, indeed, the beſt of mens religion here is but an opinion or judgment, which the breath of God's Spirit will ſhake and diſſolve every where, ſooner or later. All fleſh is graſs; and all the beauty of mens knowledge, religion, and worſhip here, will wither like graſs. All the buildings and churches that are raiſed here (how beautiful ſoever) are but Babylon, built by man's underſtanding, by man's knowledge, by man's comprehenſion, by man's wiſdom, by man's ſkill, and indeed in man's will and time, and their ſtanding, beauty, ſtrength, and glory, is but from man, and in man's day, and will fade away like a flower.

But the true certainty is in the day of God, from the light of his Spirit ſhining into man's ſpirit, from God's

God's inward reaching to his heart by his power, and teſtifying his truth there. And this all the powers of darkneſs cannot prevail againſt in itſelf; no, nor againſt that man that is kept to it. For it is the rock (the only rock) upon which the whole church is built, and which cannot fail to preſerve every member of the church which is built upon it.

Ye then which would come to certainty in religion, obſerve the way which is made manifeſt from God in this our day, bleſſed be his name, which is this: mind the witneſs of God in thy heart, and come to, and build upon, the light thereof. Dwell not in reaſonings; take not up thy religion in reaſonings of the mind; but paſs through them, paſs beyond them, into a light of an higher nature. Wait to know the birth which is from God, and the light which he gives to that birth. What is the birth? Is not the birth of and from the ſecond Adam? And what is the heavenly birth's light? Is it not the light of the ſecond Adam? Is it not in nature and kind above the light of the firſt Adam? Where is the ſeat of reaſonings? Is it not the earthly mind, the fallen mind? Here lies man's ſtrength; here is man's wiſdom; here is man's life. It is ſo indeed; but the wiſdom of Chriſt, the light of Chriſt, the life of Chriſt, the power of Chriſt, is a croſs to this; finds it in the enmity againſt God, crucifies it, ſlays it, brings it to nothing; and he that will become wiſe as to God, muſt become a fool unto all this, a child, a babe, entering the kingdom without this, and muſt there remain naked as to this, and never put it on more.

Now obſerve (ye that have underſtanding and true ſenſe) the difference between the religion which God hath taught us, and led us into, and the religions of all men upon the earth beſides.

Our religion ſtands wholly *out* of that, which all their religion ſtands *in*. Their religion ſtands in the comprehenſion, in a belief of a literal relation or deſcription. Our religion ſtands in a principle which changeth the mind, wherein the Spirit of life appeareth to, and

and witneſſeth in the conſcience to and concerning the things of the kingdom; where we hear the voice, and ſee the expreſs image of the Inviſible One, and know things, not from an outward relation, but from their inward nature, virtue, and power. Yea, here (we muſt profeſs) we ſo know things, that we are fully ſatisfied about them, and could not doubt concerning them, though there never had been word or letter written of them; though indeed it is alſo a great comfort, and ſweet refreſhment to us, to read that teſtified of outwardly, which (through the tender mercy of our God) we feel and enjoy inwardly. And in this our whole religion conſiſts; to wit, in the ſilence and death of the fleſh, and in the quickening and flowing life of the Spirit. For he who is of the new birth, of the new creation, of the ſecond Adam, (the Lord from heaven) is as really alive to God, and as really lives to him in his Spirit, as ever he was really dead in treſpaſſes and ſins in the time of his alienation and eſtrangement from God.

Of Tenderneſs of Spirit, and Perſecution.

HE which is born of God, he who is of the love, and in the love, cannot but be tender. He who is born of the earthly wiſdom, who taketh up and holdeth forth a religion there, cannot but perſecute. Why ſo? Becauſe he cannot but judge that any man may take up religion as he hath done, and ſo, by reaſonings, may come to acknowledge and take up what he hath taken up, and holdeth forth, or elſe he is wilful and ſtubborn, as he judgeth. But now he that is born of God, and hath received his light, knowledge, religion, and way of worſhip from him, he knoweth that no man can rightly receive them but the ſame way; to wit, from God, by the light which he cauſeth to ſhine into the heart at his pleaſure, and in the faith

which he gives. So that God's free and powerful Spirit is to be waited upon, for the working of all in his people, and not any forced to act beyond, or contrary to, the principle of his life and light in them.

A QUERY concerning SEPARATION.

Query. WHETHER, after the apoſtaſy from the Spirit, life, and power of the apoſtles, and the getting up of the antichriſtian ſtate, church, and worſhip, there muſt not of neceſſity be a ſeparation from all theſe, before there can be a recovery of the life and power again, and of the true church-ſtate, which was brought forth in the days of the apoſtles? Muſt there not be a perfect coming out of the corrupt ſtate (in the whole nature, ſeveral parts and degrees of it) before there can be a reſtoration to, and witneſſing of, the true and pure ſtate? Muſt not the Chriſtians now come out of all the antichriſtian inventions and churches, as well as the Chriſtians of old came out of all the heatheniſh worſhip, yea, out of the Jewiſh worſhip and church, (which once was of God) before they can become an holy building, an habitation to God in the Spirit? Yea, doth not the ſame Spirit which cried to the people of God then, "Come out from among them, and be ye ſeparate," &c. call and cry now, *Come out of her, my people,* out of Babylon, out of the falſe church, out of all the antichriſtian buildings, which are reared up after the ſeveral forms and ways of mens inventing, being out of the Spirit, life, and power, which alone is able to build up in and unto the Lord? And what is that which cries out againſt ſeparation, in the day of the Lord's dividing and ſeparating, but that ſpirit which would hold back the ſoul from being gathered to the Lord, in the chains of darkneſs, and in the land of death and confuſion?

Oh!

Oh! that men knew that which divides and ſeparates, and which is appointed by God to divide and ſeparate both inwardly and outwardly, and might feel the full work and effect of it, even perfect ſeparation from all that is not of God, that ſo they might be joined to him, and built up in him, who is the life, reſt, peace, joy, and pure breath of the ſoul for ever! The word of God is quick and powerful, ſharper than any two-edged ſword; and what doth it do? Why it ſeparates between nation and nation, between church and church, between people and people, between cattle and cattle, between ſoul and ſoul, yea, between the thoughts and intents of the ſame heart; owning and cheriſhing all that is of the pure, and condemning and deſtroying all that is of the impure. And happy, oh! for ever happy is he, who can witneſs the work of this word perfected in his ſoul, even the axe of the Lord powerfully laid to, and having cut down all that is corrupt in him, that the pure plant of God may flouriſh, and bring forth fruit in him in peace, without annoyance or interruption of the impure. Then the river of life, as the ſtreams of everlaſting righteouſneſs, ſhall flow into the veſſel, and Jeruſalem become in and to him a quiet habitation, and nothing be able to hurt or deſtroy any thing of life in him, who dwells in, and abides on, the mountain of God's holineſs. Oh! bleſſed is the race of travellers, which in the pure light of the everlaſting day are travelling thitherwards, even with their hearts and faces faithfully bent towards Sion, which is the holy, ſpiritual, heavenly hill of God! And bleſſed, oh! bleſſed for ever is the Lord God of life and power, who is the faithful guider, leader, and conductor of all that follow the footſteps of the flock, in the way which is pure, true, living, and everlaſting.

Concerning the washing away of Sin from the Conscience, and the Garment of Salvation, and what it is that is covered therewith.

THERE is somewhat appointed by God to wash away sin, which is the water of regeneration, the water of life, the Spirit's water, and the blood of the Lamb, which are known, received, and felt by faith in the light of the Spirit, wherein alone his work is wrought.

Thus now, upon believing, the soul is washed; the faith brings in, or lets in, the water and blood, which cleanse and purge the conscience from the sin, which before stained and defiled it: and according to the faith, so is the water and blood let in, and accordingly is the washing. And he that is baptized, he that is washed by the Spirit, comes out of the water clean; and watching to the light wherein he was purified, witnesseth the powerful word of life as able to preserve in cleanness, as it was to cleanse.

But if there be not a watch to, and faith in, and single-hearted obedience to, that which purified, and keepeth pure, there is that near which will defile, where it is hearkened to and let in; there is that which will tempt to lust and sin, and so draw into darkness and death again. And if any man sin afterwards, sin defiles again, and the stain thereof will lie upon the conscience, till by repentance and faith the water and blood be let in again, and the cleansing virtue from it received and restored again. So that if any man sin, there is an advocate,* an intercessor, a divine helper, one who hath the water of life, and the

* But this is not the state of them that sin wilfully after they have received the knowledge of truth.

blood

blood of life to wash with. There is a fountain set open for sin, and for uncleanness, for Judah and Jerusalem to wash therefrom; but every defilement and pollution sticks until it be washed off.

Now there are sins of several kinds. Some are easily remitted and washed off, insomuch as the stain is hardly felt by the soul, the tender mercy and pure life doth so readily and naturally flow over them. Some again are long held and bound by the Spirit upon the conscience, and often remembered to the heart, which is apt to backslide: yea, there is in some cases a severe judgment, and a long waiting on the Lord for his mercy, and for his renewing and enlivening of faith, before the water and blood which washeth can be again felt. For faith is not in a man's power, nor repentance neither; but they are given of God, to whom and when he pleaseth. And a man that is in part converted, may give ear to the enemy, and let in sin and death upon the soul; but he cannot repent again presently, nor believe again presently; but as God breathes upon him, and revives the work of faith and repentance in him.

There were sins under the old covenant, and there are sins under the new. The sins of the old covenant did lie upon him that committed them, until they were expiated according to the law of the old covenant; and sins under the new covenant lie also upon the soul and conscience, until they be expiated according to the law of the new covenant; which is until the Advocate interpose and plead with the Father, and give faith and repentance to the soul, and sprinkle upon the heart and conscience that water and blood which hath virtue in it to wash. And if it were not for this after-washing (as I may so say) no man could be saved: but though he were once washed, yet sinning again afterwards, he would die in his sins, (and so fall under condemnation) unless he were again washed. Oh! blessed be the name of the Lord, for the water and blood of the covenant, and for his con-

tinual pouring them out upon the ſouls of his, in the light that is eternal!

Now as men come to the truth as it is in Jeſus, they will find their own apprehenſions about theſe things to have been but dreams, wherewith the enemy hath fed and pleaſed them, while he hath lulled them aſleep in the night of darkneſs, that he might the better ſteal away the true weighty knowledge of the things of the kingdom from them. Thus men have dreamed about juſtification, about ſanctification, about regeneration, about redemption, about faith, hope, love, righteouſneſs, peace, joy, &c. And have been miſtaken about them, miſſing of that power and light whereby and wherein they are revealed and made manifeſt. Now he that will rightly know theſe things, muſt know them in the feeling and true experience; and therein he ſhall find all theſe are wrought in a myſterious way of pure life's operation, out of the reach of man's comprehenſion; and no man can underſtand them, but as the new and holy underſtanding is given him; nor retain the ſenſe and knowledge of them, but as he abides in the new nature, and retains the new underſtanding.

So for the garment of ſalvation; that is Chriſt, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, the nature of Chriſt, the Spirit of Chriſt. This is the holy covering. He that puts on Chriſt, puts on this: he that wears Chriſt, wears this: he that appears before God in Chriſt, appears in this; and the ſoul puts on this, as it puts off the other. It is the purified ſoul that only puts on him that is pure: and as a man is cleanſed from the impure, ſo only hath he in him a capacity of receiving and being clothed with Chriſt. And this now is the work of the true miniſtry; to wit, to preach the Word, to reveal the Word, and bring the mind to the Word, (which changeth it, and begets the new capacity) and ſo to begin the work of life and reconciliation, wherein and whereby there is ſome unclothing of the old, and ſome clothing with the new; and ſo to carry on this work in the Spirit and power of the Father

Father until it be perfected. And this is a bleſſed work, and bleſſed is the miniſtry which is called to, and entruſted with, this work, being faithful in it: and bleſſed are they that witneſs the truth of, and receive the effect of, this miniſtry, and are ſubject to it in the Lord. For through and under this miniſtry there is a receiving of a perfect gift in ſome meaſure at firſt (wherein ſome true union and little acquaintance with the Lord of life is at firſt witneſſed, and ſome operation of the light and power of his Holy Spirit): and a growing up in it unto perfection, as the ſoul is exerciſed by it, and faithful to the Lord in the exerciſe, under the daily croſs, which daily worketh againſt and crucifieth in the heart, mind, life, and converſation whatever is contrary to God, as it is ſingly waited for, taken up, and ſubjected to.

SOME QUESTIONS and ANSWERS,

CONCERNING

The Church of the New Covenant, the Rock or Foundation whereon it is built, and its Preſervation by and upon the Rock. With ſome QUERIES concerning the ſcattered Eſtate of the true Church, and concerning that Church which got up in its Stead, and made a great Shew with her golden Cup, for the Time while the true Church was ſcattered.

Queſt. 1. *WHAT is the church of God under the new agreement or covenant?*

Anſ. It is a company of living ſtones, quickened by God, and knit together in the unity and fellowſhip of his Spirit, to worſhip God together in his Spirit, and offer up unto him ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt. What was the church of the old covenant? Was it not the ſeed of Abraham, the outward Jews, the children of the old covenant? And what is the church of the new covenant? Is it not the ſeed of God, the Jews inward, the children of the new covenant?

Queſt. 2. *How are theſe ſtones joined together?*

Anſ. By the Spirit of life, which begets them all in one nature, and knits them together in that nature. By the inward circumciſion, cutting off that which cauſeth

cauſeth enmity and diſunion, and ſo fitting them to be made one new lump in Chriſt. By Chriſt's baptiſm, which is the baptiſm of fire and of his Spirit, which burns up the old earthly nature, and ſo baptizes them into one new living body, ſuitable and fitting to their head, which is the fountain of life, and diſtributes life through all the body, according to its capacity, need, and ſervice.

Queſt. 3. *Upon what is this church built?*

Anſ. Upon the rock or foundation of God, which God hath laid in his ſpiritual Sion; which rock is Chriſt. For "other foundation can no man lay, than "that which is laid, which is Jeſus Chriſt;" nor other rock did the Lord ever chooſe for his church to be built upon; nor hath any other rock ſufficient ſtrength to bear up the building againſt the ſtorms and ſtreſs of the powers of darkneſs, which it often meeteth with, even every member, in its travels; after it is once built on the rock, the gates of hell preſs hard upon it; but abiding on the rock, it feels the ſtrength and preſervation of the rock. For as they cannot prevail againſt Chriſt, ſo neither can they prevail againſt that which is built upon him. But if there be a going forth from the ſtrength and preſervation, there is a liableneſs to be made a prey. And the promiſe is not abſolutely and perpetually to that perſon or congregation which is received or let into the truth; but to that perſon or church which abideth and continueth in the truth unto the end. The Jews were ſafe in the faith and obedience of their covenant; and the Chriſtians, or Chriſtian churches, are not ſafe but in the faith and obedience of theirs. For if they walked not humbly with the Lord, and in his fear, which keeps the heart from departing from him, and in the faith whereby they ſtand, they were to be cut off from their church-ſtate, as well as the Jews were from theirs, as the apoſtle Paul expreſsly tells the church at Rome, Rom. xi. 21, 22.

Queſt. 4. *What was Paul?*

Anſ.

Anſ. The apoſtle of the Gentiles, who laboured abundantly, even more abundantly than all the other apoſtles; and hath left more inſtructions relating to the Gentiles than all the apoſtles beſides; and was tender of them, in ſtanding for and defending their liberty in Chriſt, when Peter a little warped, and was to be blamed, Gal. ii. 11. For indeed man cannot be certain and infallible, further than he keepeth to, and is exerciſed by, the certain and infallible Spirit; which he is ſubject to be tempted to err from, further than he ſtands upon the watch, and cannot but err from, unleſs he feel a continual preſervation in the fear, and by the power of the Lord. And the certainty of truth doth not depend ſo much upon the perſon from whom it is received, as upon the demonſtration and evidence to the conſcience wherein it is received. The apoſtles were not lords over the true Chriſtians faith; but helpers of their joy. And Chriſt did not require his diſciples to believe whatever he knew to be true; but prepared their capacities, and dropped in according to their capacities. And this is the way of the true miniſters, to wait on God to beget, and on him again to water the begotten ſoul, and carry on his work in it; to make them know Chriſt their Maſter, from whom they are to receive light, life, inſtruction, and direction; and to feel the Head, and be joined to the Head, and receive from the Head their knowledge, as well the leaſt as the greateſt, Heb. viii. What is Paul? What is Apollos? What is Cephas? Were not they carnal that cried up theſe one above another? Yet the younger ought to be ſubject to the elder, and all to be ſubject one to another in the truth, 1 Pet. v. 5.

Queſt. 5. *What was Peter?*

Anſ. One of the diſciples of Chriſt, a precious ſtone in the building, (John i. 43.) one of the moſt eminent apoſtles, even the choſen miniſter to them of the circumciſion, as Paul was to the Gentiles. But he knew that Chriſt was the only rock or foundation, as well as Paul, and that Chriſt alone was able to bear the

the weight of that building, and to defend it againſt the gates of hell; and he never had commiſſion, nor can it be proved that he ever preached himſelf the rock, but he preached Chriſt the foundation-ſtone, the rock of offence, the rock of defence, &c. ſee 1 Pet. ii. 4. and ver. 6, 7, 8. And if an angel from heaven, or any man or church on earth, ſo interpret any ſcripture, as to hold forth any ſuch thing, that any elſe beſides Chriſt is the rock, they plainly ſhew that they are erred from the truth, and that their interpretation is of their own private ſpirit, and not that publick Spirit which all the prophets of God, and apoſtles, and truly holy men, were guided by.

Queſt. 6. *Was the church always to be a gathered company? Or was there a poſſibility of their being ſcattered?*

Anſ. There was a poſſibility of their being ſcattered; yea, a certainty, if they grew corrupt in doctrine and practice, and kept not the faith, Rom. xi. For the Lord God intended a pure building, a ſpiritual building, fit to offer the ſpiritual ſacrifices, 1 Pet. ii. 5. An holy people, ſeparated from the world, 2 Cor. vi. 17. in which he might dwell and walk, ver. 16. If therefore any church depart from the Spirit, and life, and power of the apoſtles, and mix again with the world, loſing their own proper pale which fenced from the world, they ſoon loſe that which maketh them a church of God, and ſo become a ſynagogue of Satan.

Now it is in my heart alſo to propound a few queries concerning the ſcattered and hidden eſtate and condition of the church, and concerning that church which got up in the view of the world, and was acknowledged by the world inſtead thereof afterwards.

Queſt. 1. Whether the true church did retain her miniſtry outwardly, and her outward ordinances, and way of worſhip of the outward court, after her ſcattering? Or whether the falſe church, which appeared in her room as if ſhe had been the true, caught up and appeared in the outwardneſs of theſe? The grounds of this query are theſe following.

1. Be-

1. Becauſe, upon God's meaſuring of his temple and worſhippers, the outward court (conſider well what that is, and how far it extends) was left out of God's meaſure; ſo that he intended to reckon it no longer as his, but given by him to the Gentile Chriſtians; ſuch as were Chriſtians or Jews in name, but Gentiles in ſpirit and nature, Rev. xi.

2. Becauſe in the laſt days, when that ſtrange generation of Chriſtians was to ſpring up, who ſhould be lovers of their ownſelves, covetous, proud, blaſphemers, diſobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, truce-breakers, falſe-accuſers, incontinent, fierce, deſpiſers of thoſe that are good, traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleaſures more than lovers of God; yet theſe ſhould have a form of godlineſs, but deny the power thereof, 2 Tim. iii. 1, to 6. Now mind: the temple wherein was the power, God had removed with the true worſhippers; but the outward court (wherein was the appearance of ſome kind of a form of a church, miniſtry, and ordinances) thoſe had got, and were found worſhipping in it, in the midſt of all this great wickedneſs and abomination of ſpirit.

3. Becauſe the Jews (who were the type) while they were in captivity in Babylon, could not ſing the ſongs of Sion, nor had the worſhip of the outward Jeruſalem there.

And can the ſpiritual Jews ſing the ſpiritual ſongs of ſpiritual Sion, in Myſtery-Babylon? No; there they are but witneſſes to that life and power which the true church enjoyed and flouriſhed with, in her built eſtate.

Queſt. 2. Whether this is not an infallible mark, and moſt certain demonſtration of the falſe church, her ſitting upon many waters; which waters are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues? Did not the Spirit of the Lord thus mark her out to John, Rev. xvii. 15. Did the true church ever ſit upon many waters? Was not the church a gathering out of the nations into the power and life which the nations perſecuted?

cuted? But the falſe church ſits over the nations with a form of godlineſs, but without the true power thereof. Then if this be a mark that God hath ſet upon her, let every one wait to read it aright, that he may know thereby which is ſhe, and praiſe the name of the Lord for diſcovering her to him.

Queſt. 3. Whether this falſe church be not rightly called Babylon, even an heap of confuſion (in a myſtery) as to God's eye, though to man's eye her appearance may be orderly and decent? And whether ſhe be not juſtly termed, by the Spirit of the Lord, the great whore, both for largeneſs in bulk, and for the greatneſs of her fornications, having whored from the bed of the huſband, and entered into the bed of a ſtranger; and having taught and compelled others to acknowledge and worſhip in her forms; which, thus held forth and maintained by her, are not only without, but alſo againſt, the true power?

Queſt. 4. Whether antichriſt be not entered into, and become the head of, this falſe church? And whether he doth not ſit there ruling in it, even as Chriſt was head of the true, and ſat ruling in the true? And whether antichriſt doth not keep his hold of this church, and poſſeſs his ſeat in it, for many ages and generations, even from the time he got in after the days of the apoſtles, till the very coming of Chriſt in his power and brightneſs? 2 Theſſ. ii.

Queſt. 5. Whether the great plagues, woes, terrible thunders, and cups of God's indignation, ſpoken of in the book of the Revelations, are not to be poured, in their ſeveral orders and degrees, upon this falſe church, and upon antichriſt, her beloved head and king, even till ſhe be ſtripped naked, made deſolate, and her fleſh burnt with fire, and her head bruiſed and deſtroyed by Chriſt, the true Head and King of the true church?

Queſt. 6. Whether the people of God, ſuch as feel ſomewhat of the power, and bow to the Lord in Spirit and truth in ſome meaſure; yet theſe, if they mind not his call out of this Babylon, and come not fully

out

out of her, but abide in any part of her, obſerving any of her ways or worſhips, till the time of God's controverſy with her, and judging of her, whether they alſo ſhall not partake of her plagues? Rev. xviii. 4.

Queſt. 7. Whether all people have not great reaſon to fear before the Lord, and to look to their ways and worſhips, leſt they be found in any thing therein which is not of him, but contrary to him, and ſo bring upon their ſouls and bodies that wrath and ſore judgment from God, which they are not able to bear? Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11.

Queſt. 8. Whether it was not the great love and mercy of God to warn the churches of theſe things in the book of the Revelations? And whether he can be ſafe in theſe reſpects, who either doth not underſtand, or not obſerve, the warnings given by the Spirit of the Lord therein? How often is it therein ſaid, "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit "of God ſaith to the churches." It is alſo ſaid, "Bleſſed is he that readeth, and they that hear the "words of this prophecy, and keep thoſe things which "are written therein: for the time is at hand." He then that readeth not, that hath not an ear to hear the words of this prophecy, how can he keep what is written therein? How can he beware and avoid the ſeeming beauty and glory of the falſe church, or ſuffer with the faithful witneſſes of God in their teſtimony againſt her? And if he do not thus, but is entangled by the falſe church with her golden cup of fornications, (Rev. xvii. 4.) he miſſeth of the bleſſing; and ah! what is he to meet with inſtead thereof! My heart hath often melted within me, and my bowels rolled at the conſideration and deep ſenſe which the Lord hath given me of theſe things; and this I ſay therein, to thoſe that deſire life and peace from God, Oh! wait on him for the eye which ſees in his light, for the ear which hears his voice, and for the heart which underſtands the words and meſſages of his Spirit, that ye may feel his gathering, guidance, and preſervation

ſervation out of that, to which his wrath is for ever, and againſt which his wrath is to be made more manifeſt, and poured out more fully and abundantly than ever it yet was. For the Lord will empty his love and his life into Sion, and empty the very dregs and thick mixtures of the cups of his indignation into the very heart and bowels of Babylon; and her ſickneſs, miſery, woe, death, and deſtruction will be exceeding dreadful and unutterable. Therefore wait on the Lord in fear and ſingleneſs of ſpirit, crying and mourning unto him to diſcover to you the extent and limits of this falſe church, this falſe building, this building in a form and outward order, without the life and power of the Spirit; and then fly as faſt out of her, and from her, (and as far) as the Spirit of the Lord leads, even till ye come to the holy building, which is of him, and the heavenly places which are prepared there by him, for every one of his (according to their growth and ſtature in his Son) that ye may ſit down in him.

Some

Some QUERIES to PROFESSORS, who ſpeak of high Attainments and Experiences in Religion, and yet do not witneſs, nor can acknowledge, the Truth, as the Lord hath now revealed it, (and done great Things by it in the Spirits of his People) but look upon it as a poor, mean, and low Thing.

Query 1. HAVE ye known the great and terrible day of the Lord, wherein he ariſeth to ſhake terribly the earth? And have ye known that ſhaken down in you which muſt be ſhaken down and removed as a cottage, before the everlaſting kingdom can be eſtabliſhed in you?

Query 2. Do ye know the living, powerful, eternal word, which is quick and piercing, ſharper than any two-edged ſword, dividing between thought and thought, grace and grace, (as I may ſo ſpeak) light and light, life and life, ſpirit and ſpirit, power and power? &c. Have ye known it an hammer, a fire, an axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree? And do ye know the corrupt tree (root, branches, leaves, and fruit) ſo cut down by it as to cumber the ground no more?

Query 3. Do ye know the paradiſe of God, and the tree of life there? Do ye indeed feed thereon? Have ye paſſed through the flaming ſword to the tree of life? And is the flaming ſword (which once fenced from life, and the power thereof) ſet now to fence up the way to the tree of knowledge, that ye may feed no more thereon, and die, but feed only on that which is life, and gives life, and ſo live for ever?

Query 4. Have ye witneſſed the effects of the great and terrible day of the Lord in your ſpirits? Is anti-chriſt deſtroyed, the whore burnt, fleſh conſumed, man ceaſed from, both within and without? Is the loftineſs

loftineſs of man bowed down in you, the mighty removed out of his ſeat, and the meek, holy, humble ſeed raiſed up to rule in righteouſneſs in your hearts? Is every high tower battered down, and every fenced wall laid flat? Are all your imaginations, and conceivings, and fleſhly apprehendings upon ſcriptures, yea, every pleaſant picture and image of the things in heaven (formed in your minds) brought to an end, and the pure living truth of the Father waited for, received from him, and lived in? Yea, is the Lord alone exalted in your ſpirits, and all other dominion, authority, rule, and lordſhip put under?

Query 5. Do ye know the mountain of the Lord's houſe, and the Lord's houſe built and eſtabliſhed by his own Holy Spirit and power upon his own holy mountain? And do ye worſhip the Lord alone therein? Do ye come up to the New Jeruſalem, to offer your ſacrifices there, according to the inſtitution of the goſpel? And do ye worſhip the Lord there, on his own day, which he hath ſpiritually made? And do ye bear no burden, kindle no fire, do no work on that his day? Do ye never warm yourſelves at any fire, or by any ſparks of your own kindling? Or are ye yet worſhipping upon ſome of the many mountains and hills which the Lord hath not formed nor eſtabliſhed; but have been formed and ſet up by man in the night of darkneſs, before the everlaſting light of the day brake forth?

Query 6. Do ye know the wilderneſs through which the paſſage is from Egypt to Canaan? And have ye faithfully travelled in the leadings of God's Spirit there-through? And are ye entered into the pure reſt thereof? Are ye not under the law, but under grace; not under the enemy's power, but under the Spirit's power, out of the other's reach, ſo that the wicked-one cannot touch you? Have ye gone through the exerciſes and trials of the wilderneſs? Have ye fed on the manna dropt down from heaven upon your ſpirits therein? Have ye drunk of the water of the rock? Have ye ſeen the ſerpent lifted up, and felt the heal-

ing thereby? Have ye witneſſed the pillar of cloud by day, and the pillar of fire by night, to be your defence and leader? And have ye now at length received the kingdom of life, and ſit under the ſhadow of it, drinking water out of your own ciſtern, and eating under your own vine and fig-tree the fruits of the good land, after the ſhaking of that which was to be ſhaken; now being come to, and enjoying the kingdom which cannot be ſhaken? Have ye really felt theſe things, or have ye been in the dreams and imaginings about them?

Query 7. Do ye walk in the light of the Lord, as the ſpiritual houſe of Jacob is to do? Have ye received the Spirit? Do ye live in the Spirit? Are ye truly united, ſo as to become one Spirit with the Lord? Are all the walls of partition broken down? And is there nothing now between you, but of two ye are made one in that which uniteth?

If it be thus with you, then hold forth the right-hand of fellowſhip to thoſe whom the Lord hath brought hither; and know and acknowledge that whereby the Lord hath wrought in them. But if ye be not really in the thing itſelf, but only in the apprehenſions and conceivings about it, ye can never ſo be witneſſes concerning theſe things, nor concerning the truth whereby God works theſe things: and ye will find there is a great gulph between you and us, which ye cannot poſſibly paſs over, till ye meet with our principle and guide, and faithfully travel with him in the footſteps of the flock, that ye may come to the Shepherd's tents, (even the tents which the Shepherd pitcheth, and which no man can pitch) and may know the true tabernacle, ſanctuary, and temple, whereof he is the Miniſter,

OF THE

CHURCH,

IN ITS

FIRST and PURE STATE,

IN

Its Declining STATE, in its Declined STATE, and in its RECOVERY.

WITH THE

WAY of SALVATION in the COVENANT of LIFE opened,

AND

Some STUMBLING-BLOCKS Removed out of the Way of the SIMPLE-HEARTED.

Likewiſe ſome QUERIES concerning the NEW COVENANT.

WITH

An EXHORTATION to all People; but more eſpecially to ſuch as are Deſolate and Diſtreſſed.

By one who teſtifieth what he hath ſeen, and heard, and taſted, and handled of the Word, and Life Eternal,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

Whereunto is added,

A Viſit of tender and upright Love to ſuch as retain a Sincerity towards the LORD.

Alſo, A brief Account of the Ground of Certainty and Satisfaction, which it hath pleaſed the LORD to eſtabliſh in my Heart concerning Religion, and the Things of his Kingdom.

And a QUESTION anſwered, about the Way of knowing the Motions, Doctrines, and Teachings of CHRIST's Spirit.

With ſomewhat relating to the GOSPEL-REST, or SABBATH.

And ſome QUERIES to ſuch as complain of Want of Power to become the LORD's, and ſerve him.

THE PREFACE.

THE true church is a myſtery, and ſo is the falſe alſo; neither of which the outward eye of man's underſtanding is able to diſcern; but he alone who is enlightened and taught of God. Who can ſee how the Spirit of God works, changing mens hearts, gathering them into his truth, and building them up into an holy temple in his Son? And who can diſcern how the ſpirit of deceit works with an outward knowledge, doctrine, and form of religion, perſuading or compelling men thereunto, and ſo builds up a falſe church? Yea, who can tell when the Spirit of the Lord withdraweth from a church, which was once his, leaving it to the other ſpirit to re-enter and poſſeſs; from which time it becometh a ſynagogue of Satan? There was need of the anointing of God's wiſdom and Spirit to try Jews and apoſtles (for there were ſuch, even in the apoſtles days, as ſaid they were ſo, but were not); and there is alſo need of the ſame wiſdom and ſpirit to try churches, whether they be indeed the churches of Chriſt, (in and of his Spirit and power) or only in the name and outward profeſſion of the thing, without the nature, Spirit, life, and power thereof.

The apoſtle Paul, (who was the apoſtle of the Gentiles, and knew what was likely to be their future ſtate) writing to the Romans, tells them, that the Gentiles were cut out of the olive-tree, which was wild by nature; and were, contrary to nature, ingrafted into the true Olive-tree, and ſo came to partake of the root and fatneſs thereof. But withal he tells them, that unleſs they did continue in the faith, and in the goodneſs of God, keeping out of the high-mindedneſs and conceitedneſs of their own eſtate and condition, in the fear (which makes the heart clean, and preſerves it in the cleanneſs from that which would defile, and cauſe it to depart from the Lord) they likewiſe ſhould be cut off, Rom. xi. 17. and 20, &c.

Now it would be ſeriouſly conſidered, whether the Gentile churches did abide in the faith, and in the goodneſs and power of the Lord, which gathered them? Or whether they grew high-minded, holding their eſtate in a preſumption (as if the promiſe was ſo to them, that they muſt needs be the church for ever) out of the fear, and ſo were caſt off by God, and cut off (according to the apoſtle's words) from God's Spirit, and ſo have not partook of the root and fatneſs of the olive-tree, for many generations? It would alſo further be inquired, (if it prove thus upon true ſearch and examination, that they have been cut off) whether they can partake of the root and fatneſs of the true Olive-tree any more, till he that caſt them off, gather and build them up again?

It is true, there have been witneſſes againſt the corrupt ſtate, even a ſeed who have been perſecuted by it; and theſe have, in ſome meaſure, partook of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-tree, all this time of the degeneration. But hath the church-ſtate of the Gentiles, which provoked God, and was caſt off, and perſecuted the witneſſes of the Lamb, his holy ſeed, who could not but, in his nature and Spirit, teſtify againſt their corruption? Have they partook of the root and fatneſs

fatneſs of the Olive-tree, or have they not rather grown up from, and drunk in of, the ſap and juice of another ſtock?

The ſame apoſtle ſpeaks of the man of ſin, that wicked one, the ſon of perdition; who ſhould get into the temple of God, ſit there, and ſhew himſelf as God; and yet oppoſe and exalt himſelf above all that is truly called God, and that of right ought to be worſhipped, 2 Theſ. ii. 4. Now when he gets into the temple, doth not he leaven it with his wicked ſpirit, making it become wicked, like him that ſits and reigns in it, and is the head of it? And not the church or temple, all the while he ſits in it, partake of the root and fatneſs of the Olive-tree? (Of Chriſt its former Vine, of Chriſt its former Head?) Or doth it not rather ſuck in, and partake of, the venom and poiſon of this new head? And how long is this new head, this falſe head of the church, to ſit in the temple? Is it not from the very time of his getting in, till Chriſt, by the Spirit of his mouth, conſume and ſcatter him; and by the brightneſs of his appearance and coming, utterly deſtroy him? ver. 8.

This is certain, (as certain as ever there was a true church in the days of the apoſtles) that after the apoſtles days there got up a falſe church, which the Spirit of the Lord calls the great whore (indeed ſhe was far bigger, by multitudes of degrees, than ever the true church was). This great whore had a golden cup in her hand, wherewith ſhe made the kings and inhabitants of the earth drunk. And ſhe ſat upon many waters; which waters are peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues. Did ever the true church do thus? That was a little flock, gathered out of peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues, reigning in the Spirit and power of the Lord, over them only who were thus gathered; but never ſat upon whole peoples, nations, multitudes, and tongues, as this great whore hath done? Rev. xvii. 1.—15.

Now it would be worth the inquiry what this cup is (this golden cup, which appears like gold)? And

what this wine is, wherewith ſhe made the kings and inhabitants of the earth drunk? Aſk her, and ſhe will tell you, It is the cup of ſalvation, and her wine the wine of the kingdom, even the doctrine and diſcipline of holy mother-church; out of which, and without which, no man can be ſaved. But aſk the Spirit of the Lord, (or hear what the Spirit of the Lord ſaid to the churches concerning it) and he will tell you, it is the wine of fornication, the cup of deſtruction, full of abominations, and filthineſs of her fornication; and that ſhe ſhall be ſo far from ſaving others, that ſhe ſhall be deſtroyed and periſh herſelf; and whoever drinks of her wine ſhall periſh, unleſs he vomit it up again, and drink of the pure blood of the Lamb after it. See Rev. xvii. and alſo chap. xviii. and chap. xiv. 9, 10, 11.

Now one word, in the love and truth of God, to all that have ſeparated from this church. Have ye ſeparated fully? Have ye ſeparated wholly? Have ye ſeparated from her in nature and ſpirit? Have ye waited for the building which God alone can rear; for the church which he alone can frame? Or have ye built up another church, in the reſemblance and likeneſs of that ye ſeparated from? This is a weighty thing: ye muſt anſwer it to God, and ſtand by his judgment therein. I beſeech you conſider it. "What will it "profit a man," ſaith Chriſt, "if he gain the whole "world, and loſe his own ſoul?" So ſay I in this caſe: What would it profit you, if ye could make your church ſtand, and be approved in the ſight of the whole world, if the Lord diſown and diſallow it, and they that are gathered into it periſh by it? If it be not of God's building, if it have not his preſence, virtue, Spirit and power in it, it cannot ſave. Oh! hear, hear! for the Lord will ſtrip Babylon, and fill her with dreadful plagues and judgments; and ſhe ſhall appear naked as ſhe is, and become the ſcorn of every eye, and the reproach of every beholder: and that which hath been reproached, ſcorned, hated, and perſecuted by her, the Lord will honour.

Now

Now conſider, and wait on the Lord, to know the extent of Babylon; that ye may not be found by the Spirit of the Lord (nor by his angels, which pour out his plagues upon her) within her limits. For the Great Whore is not Babylon only, or alone; but ſhe is the Mother of harlots, and all her Daughters are harlots alſo; even all that have built up churches, like her, (in her ſpirit, with her materials) out of the leading, guidance, and power of the Spirit of truth.

OF

OF THE

CHURCH.

I. Of the CHURCH in its Firſt and Pure State, when it was clothed with the Sun, had the Moon under its Feet, and was crowned with the Crown of Twelve Stars, travailing to Bring-forth, and Brought-forth the Man-Child, which was to Rule all Nations with the Rod of Iron.

IT pleaſed the Father to ſend his Son into the world, (in his name, power, and authority) to gather out of the world; and to manifeſt his name to the men whom he ſhould gather out of the world. The Jews (for all their great profeſſion, and high eſteem of themſelves) were but a worldly polity, having but worldly, elementary ſhadows of the good things to come, and to be ſet up in the kingdom of the Meſſiah. John preached, *That the kingdom was at hand*; Chriſt ſaid, *It was come:* John prepared for it; Chriſt brought it. He came in the Spirit, in the life, in the virtue, in the dominion of the Moſt High; and he gathered diſciples unto him, by the word and power of the Father. And thoſe that continued in his word, were his diſciples indeed; of his gathering; ſuch as the Father had ſent the Son out to ſeek; even the new ſort of worſhippers, who ſhould worſhip neither at Samaria,

Samaria, nor Jeruſalem; nor with reference to any other outward place; but in Spirit and in truth. They ſhould meet together in that name, wherein Chriſt had gathered them; and meeting ſo, he would be in the midſt of them, and they ſhould feel the preſence, power, and authority, which belonged to his church.

Now, if any would know what kind of perſons theſe diſciples are, Chriſt giveth many deſcriptions of them. They are ſuch as are born from above, ſuch as are changed by the name and power which gathers them. They are Jews inward, circumciſed inwardly; ſuch as are baptized with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire; ſquared ſtones, hewn by the Spirit, for the ſpiritual building; not old, rough, fierce, cruel, implacable, unregenerate, unholy ſpirits; but meek, gentle, lowly, tender, poor in ſpirit, merciful, peaceable in themſelves, and making peace among men, renewed, and ſanctified in ſpirit; holy in converſation, ſuffering (both from the heatheniſh, and from the worldly-profeſſing ſpirit) for that power of truth and righteouſneſs, which they profeſs and bear witneſs to. They are the ſalt of the earth, having that in them which ſeaſoneth their own hearts, and which hath virtue in it to ſeaſon others. They are the light of the world, having that in them which caſts rays of light, conviction, and demonſtration, wherever they go. They being changed into the leaven of the kingdom, become a leaven, and ſo a weight upon iniquity; teſtifying againſt, yea, bowing down and afflicting that ſpirit, as the power of life ſprings in them and breaks forth through them.

Now, if the church be thus; if it be a gathering by the power into the power; by Chriſt, who came in the name, into the name in which he came; muſt not the miniſtry needs be much more thus? Muſt not they be grown in the name, be grown in the power, who are to miniſter to thoſe who are gathered into the name, who are gathered into the power? Muſt not they be well grown in the Spirit, if they be able miniſters of the Spirit? Did not Chriſt, when he ſent

out

out his disciples to preach in his name, give them of his Spirit and power? And afterwards, when he was to go away, and they to succeed him, what were they to succeed him in? Were they not to succeed him in his Spirit and power? And did not he bid them wait for it, and receive it, before they went forth to preach and set up his kingdom? And was it not by this the church was gathered? And can the church be preserved by any thing beneath this? Yea, falling short of this, is it not in a degenerated and fallen estate?

After that those who had been gathered in the name, had waited as Christ directed them, for the holy Spirit and power, and after it had fallen upon them, then the glory began, then the ministry shined, then the church (or people gathered in the Spirit and power) shined; then great life was in them all, then great grace and holiness was upon them all; then faith (which springs from the Spirit and power) was fresh, then love abounded; then they minded not earthly things, but the kingdom, the life, the glory, which was come upon them in power; then Satan's kingdom fell down like lightning, and they went on (in and with the Spirit which led them) conquering the Jewish professors, and the heathenish worshippers also; none being able to resist the power and Spirit wherein they spake and ministered. Read the scriptures of the New Testament, and wait on God for the opening of the true eye in you; and these things will be manifest and plain to you therein; for the sweetness, freshness, preciousness, and beauty of that state, may abundantly be read there, by those whose eyes the Lord opens. To instance in some places.

Peter writes two general epistles, in one whereof he speaks of their having received like precious faith with them, 2 Pet. i. 1. and in the other, that they did rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory, 1 Pet. i. 8. Yea, he speaks also of their being as lively stones, built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, (mark; all God's people who are gathered into the name, who are of the faith, who are in the life

and

and power, are prieſts unto him) to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices, acceptable to God by Jeſus Chriſt, 1 Peter ii. 5. Now was it a ſmall thing to be a prieſt under the law, to offer up the outward ſacrifices thereof? What is it then to be a prieſt in the Holy Spirit and power of life?

John alſo writes a general epiſtle, wherein he divides Chriſtians into three eſtates, (children, young men, fathers) ſpeaking great things and glorious of them all. He ſaid, "The darkneſs is paſt, and the true "light now ſhineth." Paul had ſaid, The night is far ſpent, and the day is at hand; but he ſaid, the night is paſt, and the day is come, 1 John ii. 8. And he writes to all, (children, young men, fathers) as being paſſed from the darkneſs, and in the light of the day. The little children had had their ſins forgiven them for his name's ſake, and had known the Father, ver. 12, 13. The young men were ſtrong, and the word of God did abide in them, and they had overcome the wicked one, ver. 14. The fathers knew him that was from the beginning. ver. 13, 14. and knowing that, they knew enough; for that was it which appeared to ſave, and that was it which was to be preached, even that which was from the beginning, the light which was with God, the light which was in God, the light which was God, in which is no darkneſs at all, chap. i. 1. 5. Yea, the little children had an unction from the Holy One, and they knew all things; and John wrote not unto them as not knowing the truth, but becauſe they knew it, chap. ii. 18. 20, 21. Yea, they had received the anointing, and it did abide in them, and they needed not that any man ſhould teach them, but as the ſame anointing taught them of all things; and it ſo taught them, as that no ſeducer nor antichriſtian deceiver could impoſe or prevail upon them, they keeping to it, ver. 18.—26, 27. What a glorious ſtate was here, when the little children were thus advanced in the ſtrength and power of life? Sure that promiſe was now made good indeed, "Ye ſhall be all taught of God," when the little children

children were thus taught. Yea, and they were taught to abide in him, ſo as they might not ſin; for how could they, the anointing abiding in them, and teaching them of all things, and they being in ſubjection thereto; for that preſerves out of ſin the veſſel in whom it dwells and reigns. Sin is a tranſgreſſion of the law; but they that are in the anointing, taught by the anointing, ſubject to the anointing, are far above the righteouſneſs of the law, even in the righteouſneſs of the Son; the righteouſneſs of whoſe nature is far above the righteouſneſs which the law requires of man's nature. And let men talk and imagine what they will, the ſinner is not in the redemption and power of righteouſneſs, which is by Jeſus Chriſt. For that which is born of God doth not commit ſin, but the ſeed remaineth in him which is born of God, preſerving him from the nature and ſpirit of the devil, and from the works which flow from that nature and ſpirit, chap. iii. 4, &c. Yea, they might ſo walk as that their hearts ſhould not condemn them; but that they might have confidence towards God, ver. 20, 21. And as Chriſt ſaid to the Father, "Father, thou al-"ways heareſt me;" ſo could they ſay, "Whatſoever "we aſk, we receive of him, becauſe we keep his "commandments, and do thoſe things that are pleaſ-"ing in his ſight," ver. 22. even as Chriſt had ſaid; "He that ſent me is with me," &c. "for I do always "thoſe things that pleaſe him," John viii. 29. Yea, theſe little children, having received the anointing, were able to try ſpirits, and had tried and overcome them, (notwithſtanding the ſubtilty and ſtrength of all their deceits) becauſe that light, life, Spirit, and power which dwelt within them, was greater than that which was in the world, chap. iv. 1, 4. And can the leſs overcome the greater, the greater keeping to its ſtrength? Nay, nay: theſe that are of the love, and dwell in the love, are (by the power and virtue of the love) kept out of all the ſnares and devices of the enmity; for the enmity cannot enter the love, nor the ſoul that abides in the love; but only him that de-

parts

parts out of it. Here is a munition of rocks, here is ſafety indeed; let him that hath an ear hear, and let him that hath a ſpiritual eye read and conſider. What ſhould be ſaid more of them? They were in the love which keeps the commandments, of the birth to which the victory is given, and in the faith which gives the victory, chap v. 3, 4. Yea, did they not ſo keep themſelves, as that the wicked one could not touch them? ver. 18. How could he, when they had overcome him, and abode in that which overcame him? Satan falls like a flaſh of lightning before the power of truth, before the living faith; the faith which is from, and ſtands in, the power. And if the devil would fly from thoſe that reſiſted him, how much more would he fly from thoſe that had overcome him, and ſtood armed with that armour which is paſnful and dreadful to him?

Again, the apoſtle that writeth to the Hebrews, ſpeaketh of their work and labour of love, (which advanceth the ſoul apace towards the kingdom) and of their patient enduring the trials, perſecutions, afflictions, and croſſes, (through which perfection is attained, James i. 4.) Heb. vi. 10. and chap. x. 32, 33. Yea, he ſpeaketh expreſsly concerning them, that they were come to Mount Sion, and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, and to an innumerable company of angels; to the general aſſembly and church of the firſt-born which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, and to Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of ſprinkling, chap. xii. 22, 23, 24. and that they had received, or were receiving, a kingdom which could not be moved, ver. 28.

There is another place in my heart to mention, which ſpeaks great glory and an high ſtate, in the ſenſe of my ſpirit, attributing glory and dominion to Chriſt for his loving them, and waſhing them from their ſins in his own blood, and making them kings and prieſts unto God and his Father, Rev. i. 5, 6. What is he who

who is both a king and prieſt to God? Surely he is waſhed, ſurely he is clothed with the prieſt's raiment, ſurely he is in the dominion and purity of life, who reigns and offers up therein holy ſacrifices to the Father.

Thus far have inſtances been given in reference to the general ſtate. Now it is alſo in my heart to give ſome inſtances in particular churches, wherein teſtimony is given to the freſhneſs of life in them, and of their precious ſtate therein.

Firſt, I ſhall inſtance in that church at *Jeruſalem:* in what a beauteous glory and luſtre did they ſpring forth! Acts ii. 41. to the end. Conſider the place well, and tell me, if this was not the beginning of the ſpiritual and heavenly *Jeruſalem*; if the glory of it did not deſcend upon this new-gathered people and converts? So likewiſe ſee chap. iv. 31, &c.

The church at *Rome*, the apoſtle Paul ſays, were beloved of God; and that their faith was ſpoken of throughout the whole world, Rom. i. 7, 8. Now what a glorious precious ſtate was this! For by faith is water drawn out of the wells of ſalvation: and how much might they draw, who abounded in faith! True faith ſprings from the power of life, and it brings the power of life into the ſoul in which it ſprings, according to the degree and growth of it. He that is beloved of God, and abounds in faith towards him, what glory, what life, what virtue, what power can he want?

The ſame apoſtle, writing to the church at *Philippi*, ſaith, he did *thank God, upon every remembrance of them; making requeſt for them with joy always, in every prayer of his for them all, for their fellowſhip in the goſpel* (which is power and life to them that have fellowſhip therein) *from the firſt day until now*, Phil. i. 3, 4, 5. And he calls them *dearly beloved and longed-for, his joy and crown*, chap. iv. 1.

So writing to the ſaints and faithful brethren at Coloſſus, he gives *thanks for their faith, and their love to all the ſaints*, chap. i. 3, 4. And ſaith further concerning them, *that the word of the truth of the goſpel had*

had brought forth fruit in them, ſince the day they heard and knew the grace of God in truth, ver. 5, 6. To what then were they grown? Surely very far into the myſtery of life in Chriſt; in whom they had been circumciſed and baptized, and were complete, abiding in him, and drinking in of the life, virtue, and power which floweth from him.

Likewiſe he writes to the church of the Theſſalonians, as being *in God the Father, and in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, 1 Theſſ. i. 1. Ah! how excellent and glorious was the ſtate and condition of Chriſt, to be in the Father! How glorious is the ſtate of that church, which is both in Chriſt and in the Father! He ſpeaks alſo of their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, ver. 3. Yea, he writes to them again as ſuch, Epheſ. i. 1. Surely they did abide in the vine; they did dwell in the name and power into which they were gathered; and ſo did feel the dews from above, and the ſprings from beneath; ſo that their faith did grow exceedingly, and their love abound; and the apoſtles did find cauſe of glorying in them, in the churches of God, for their patience and faith in all their perſecutions and tribulations that they endured, ver. 3, 4.

Writing alſo to the Epheſians, he giveth an high expreſſion of the goodneſs of God to his people in thoſe days, and of the bleſſedneſs of their eſtate, in that God had bleſſed them *with all ſpiritual bleſſings in heavenly places in Chriſt*, chap. i. 3. That is hard to be underſtood; yet this may be ſenſibly ſaid: in the heavenly places in Chriſt, the ſpiritual bleſſings are received; and they that are raiſed together with him, and live in and with him, do alſo ſit with him in the heavenly places in him, even in the manſions which he hath prepared, and is preparing; for he raiſeth the ſoul higher and higher, from glory to glory, at his pleaſure. The apoſtle alſo ſaith, that they were *fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſehold of God*; and were *built together in Chriſt, for an habitation of God, through the Spirit*, chap. ii. 19, 22.

So the church of Smyrna; Chriſt owneth her works, and tribulations, and poverty, and pronounceth her rich, Rev. ii. 8. Chriſt knoweth how to value things.

And the church of Philadelphia was in a very precious ſtate indeed; Chriſt owning her works, and having ſet before her an open door, which no man could ſhut; and promiſing to make thoſe who made a profeſſion of the truth (of being Jews) but were not in it, to come and worſhip before her feet, and to know that he had loved her; as alſo that he would keep her in the hour of temptation, becauſe ſhe had kept the word of his patience, Rev. iii. 8, &c. Thus it is manifeſt that the church in general, and many churches in particular, was once in a pure, freſh, living, powerful, glorious ſtate.

II. Of the Church in its declining and falling Eſtate.

BUT all the churches were not thus; nor did thoſe who were thus always continue thus: but there was a declining and falling from this glorious eſtate by degrees, even from the light, brightneſs, purity and power of the day, into the darkneſs and corruption of the night again.

And thus the apoſtaſy came in; to wit, by not keeping to the anointing, by not abiding in that Spirit, life, and power whereinto they were gathered; by not keeping ſingly to the voice of the Shepherd. For then another ear got up in them, and that itched after new and ſtrange things; not being contented with the ſimplicity of truth which is in Chriſt, with the plain heavenly bread. For truth is a naked ſimple thing to look at; not anſwering man's wiſdom at firſt, nor ever afterwards: but in the croſs to that its power is felt, and its beauty ſeen. But if the wiſdom of man get up from under the croſs, if it be not ſtill kept down by

by that, it will preſently be judging the wiſdom of God, and the plain way of truth, fooliſhneſs, and be liſtening after ſomewhat elſe.

Thus the church of Corinth, who did abound in ſpiritual gifts, yet were apt to run out, and be lifted up above their meaſures, and think they reigned as kings, without (if not beyond) the apoſtles; and ſo came into danger of hearkening to falſe ſpirits and miniſters of unrighteouſneſs, 1 Cor. iv. 8, &c. 2 Cor. x. 11.

And the churches of Galatia, which began well, and very zealouſly, even ſo as they could have plucked out their eyes for Paul's ſake; yet were afterwards ſo far bewitched and prevailed upon, that the apoſtle profeſſed he ſtood in doubt of them, and was afraid leſt he had beſtowed upon them labour in vain, Gal. iv. 11. 20.

When the enemy could not prevail in open battle, by manifeſt afflictions, oppoſitions, perſecutions, &c. then he tries by deceit, getting into the form, to ſee what he can do there, how he can pleaſe and ſatisfy men therewith, and ſo work them from that power which redeems. And thoſe that do not eye the power, keep to the power, walk in the power, and judge by the power, to be ſure he catcheth this way. "The "falſe prophets," ſaith Chriſt, "which come in ſheep's "clothing," (with the good words, as miniſters of righteouſneſs; but not with the living powerful fruits of righteouſneſs) come with ſo ſubtil an appearance, as, if it were poſſible, they would deceive the very elect: but God keepeth that eye in his elect open, which cannot be deceived; but all elſe are. They that depart from the power, they that err from the faith, they that are in the high-mindedneſs and conceitedneſs, out of the fear, they eaſily hearken to ſeducing ſpirits, and drink off their poiſon. And Peter plainly foreſaw that theſe would be many, 2 Pet. ii. 1, 2.

See alſo what complaint Paul makes to Timothy, about the declining of many from the truth; he exhorts

horts him to "keep faith and a good conſcience; "which ſome having put away, concerning faith have "made ſhipwreck; of whom is Hymeneus and Alex-"ander," 1 Tim. i. 19, 20.

Again he ſpeaks of ſome that were "already "turned aſide after Satan," chap. v. 15. And of ſome that had "erred from the faith, and pierced "themſelves through with many ſorrows," chap. vi. 10. Again: "All they which are in Aſia be turned "away from me," 2 Tim. i. 15. Likewiſe he ſpeaks of ſome, who "would increaſe unto more ungodli-"neſs," and whoſe word "will eat as doth a cank-"er," chap. ii. 16, 17. and that "evil men and "ſeducers ſhall wax worſe and worſe, deceiving and "being deceived," chap. iii. 13. Yea, "the time "will come," ſaith he, "when they will not endure "ſound doctrine," chap. iv. 3. "Demas hath for-"ſaken me, having loved the preſent world," ver. 10. "Alexander the copperſmith did me much evil: the "Lord reward him according to his works," ver. 14. "At my firſt anſwer, no man ſtood with me, but all "men forſook me," ver. 16. Surely love was grown very cold, iniquity likely to abound, and the apoſtaſy from the truth to increaſe.

And among the churches of Aſia, how many of them were warping! Epheſus, though ſhe had much good remaining in her, yet ſhe had left her firſt love, and was fallen from her firſt ſtate and works, Rev. ii. 4, 5. Pergamos alſo had them which held the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing Chriſt hated, ver. 15. Thyatira, ſhe likewiſe ſuffered the woman Jezabel, which called herſelf a propheteſs, to teach and ſeduce God's ſervants, ver. 20. (Now this ſhe ought not to have done, the churches having the Spirit, the holy anointing, to try ſpirits and prophets by; yea, to try apoſtles; which will faithfully diſco-ver which are truly ſuch, and which are not, as ver. 2.) Sardis had a name that ſhe lived, but was generally dead; there being but a few names left in Sardis, which had not defiled their garments, chap. iii. 1. 4.

Lao-

Laodicea was lukewarm; neither cold nor hot; in the profeſſion, in the form and appearance of truth; but without zeal, without life, without power, ver. 15. Now being in this ſtate, (having the form and appearance of all) ſhe judged herſelf rich, and increaſed with goods, and to have need of nothing, ver. 17. This indeed is a pleaſant ſtate in man's eye, but very loathſome to God, ver. 16. This church ſeemed to have all, but indeed had loſt all, and wanted the gold, the raiment, and the eye-ſalve; and ſo was wretched, miſerable, poor, blind, and naked, ver. 17, 18.

In this declining ſtate ſome fell from the doctrine of truth, giving heed to ſeducing ſpirits, and doctrines of devils, 1 Tim. iv. 1. Some from the fellowſhip and worſhip; it being the manner of ſome to forſake the aſſembling themſelves together, Heb. x. 25; which the church, when firſt gathered, was very diligent in, Acts ii. 42. 46. Some held the form of knowledge and profeſſion, but fell from the life and power, 2 Tim. iii. 5. Yea, many ways did the wolfiſh falſe ſpirits drive and ſcatter from the flock, as they could get entrance into mens minds.

Object. *But how could the church decline thus in the apoſtles days; the Spirit of God being ſo powerful in the apoſtles, and being alſo ſo generally then beſtowed upon believers? as Gal.* iv. 6.

Anſ. It is true, they had great advantages of ſtanding, by reaſon of the preſence and power of the Spirit with them. But yet withal, the Spirit of the Lord is tender, jealous, and might be grieved and provoked by neglects, (his warnings being ſlighted, and his motions quenched) and ſo might draw back from ſuch, as either received not the truth in the love of it, or grew cold and careleſs afterwards; and then the ſpirit of darkneſs and deceit thereby had advantage to blind them, gain upon them, and enter into that part of them, which the Spirit of the Lord had before recovered and poſſeſſed. Now the enemy having got entrance, prevails and captivates more and more, unleſs the Lord in tender love and mercy viſit it again,

lifting up a ſtandard for the ſoul, and ſo drawing it back by degrees into his light and power again.

Beſides, it is eaſy to decline (eaſy for any ſoul, eaſy for any church); but there is need of much care, fear, faith, obedience, watchfulneſs to the Lord, and againſt the enemy, &c. to preſerve and keep the eſtate of an heart, or the eſtate of a church, chaſte and pure. "Ye are kept by the power of God, through "faith unto ſalvation." Can any thing preſerve a ſoul, or church, but God's power? And doth God preſerve any ſoul, or church, but in the way he hath appointed? A church is like a garden, needs digging, dreſſing, watering, and ſun-ſhine, to cauſe it to thrive and flouriſh. Do not weeds eaſily ſpring up in a garden? yea, ranker weeds than in common ground; which ſpread apace and over-run it faſter, if it be not looked to and kept by the gardener? Read the figure, and underſtand. Are not ſpiritual weeds as corrupt and ſpreading as the outward? Are they not like leaven; have they not a poiſonous, infecting nature in them? "Know ye not," ſaith the apoſtle, "that a "little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" 1 Cor. v. 6. If but one root of bitterneſs ſpring up in a church, it may defile many, and trouble the whole, Heb. xii. 15. And as one corrupted perſon, ſo alſo one corrupted church, may infect and poiſon many more. Yea, was it not thus in the apoſtaſy? When it once got head, did it not break in and overflow apace?

III. Of the declined and fallen State of the Church.

WHEN antichriſt (or that ſpirit which wrought againſt that ſpiritual appearance of Chriſt, and power of his truth) was revealed, and got into the temple, appearing and being acknowledged there as God, then (without controverſy) was the declined ſtate.

ſtate. He had been a long while working underground by his agents and miniſters, appearing as miniſters of righteouſneſs, in a form thereof, out of, and againſt the power; but the power (in the true apoſtles and miniſters) ſtood in his way, and wrought againſt him, ſo as he could not for a long time get up. Yet he prevailed more and more in the corrupt part in men, till at length he drew many (of the very ſtars from heaven) after him; and then fighting an open battle, gets rid of the true church, vomits out a flood after her, (as if ſhe were an harlot, and not worthy the name of Chriſt's ſpouſe) and ſo gets into the temple, and is owned there (as Chriſt) in the ſtead of Chriſt.

Object. *Will any man own antichriſt, worſhip antichriſt, and acknowledge antichriſt (inſtead of Chriſt) to be God?*

Anſ. Read 2 Theſſ. ii. 4. and ſee if it be not ſo. See if he do not get into the temple, and ſit ruling and governing in the temple (that which was once ſo, and ought ſtill to be ſo) till the very coming and appearing of Chriſt in his Spirit and brightneſs, ver. 8.

Queſt. *But how could this poſſibly ever be, or how can it be?*

Anſ. He doth not directly get up, nor ſhew himſelf directly as he is; but in a myſtery of deceit. He doth not appear as antichriſt, (crying up all manner of filthineſs, abomination, and contrariety to Chriſt, in direct words) but as Chriſt, preaching righteouſneſs, crying up ſcriptures, ordinances, church-miniſtry, holineſs, &c. Yet, for all theſe words and fair pretences, he is not the true ſpirit, but the falſe, the antichriſtian; and thoſe that receive him, or bow to him in any of theſe, they bow not to Chriſt, but to him. He hath a mark, he hath a name, he hath a worſhip, he hath a church, he hath a miniſtry, he hath laws and ordinances of worſhip; which, whoſoever receives, worſhips not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, but that ſpirit which under a diſguiſe thus appeareth, which hath horns as it were of a lamb, or like a lamb; but

not the Lamb's horns, nor the Lamb's nature, nor the Lamb's Spirit, nor the Lamb's meekneſs; but the old nature of the dragon, who gives him both ſubtilty and power.

Now mark: when Chriſt brought forth his church, it was a pure, holy, ſpiritual building, built up of renewed ſpirits; ſuch as were new-born, ſuch as were waſhed, ſuch as were ſanctified, ſuch as were juſtified in the name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our God. Chriſt's church was Sion, even the holy ſeed, built upon the holy hill of God, into an holy city or temple. But antichriſt's church is Babylon, which hath the wiſdom and order of man in it, ſuch as man's eye judgeth right, but is fooliſhneſs and confuſion in the eye of God. Now the Lord hath moſt terrible plagues to pour out upon this antichriſt, and upon his Babylon; yea, upon every one that hath his mark or name, or that which amounts to his name, though it be not directly ſo called. Therefore, oh! fear the Lord God! and ye that love the peace of your ſouls, pray to be delivered from that which his wrath is to; for the dregs of the cup of trembling are to be poured out on antichriſt inward and outward, and on Babylon inward and outward. Let him that readeth underſtand the tender warnings, which are given forth in the tender nature and Spirit of the Lord; for the day of mercy ſpreads apace, and the night of anguiſh and tribulation haſtens.

The true church of Chriſt was gathered by his Spirit into his name and power, and was a ſpiritual building, or building of ſpirits therein; wherein the Spirit of the Lord was as preſent ſpiritually, as ever he appeared in the outward temple or ark outwardly. And the miniſters of the New Teſtament were made by the Spirit, and ſent forth by the Spirit, and in the power. "Stephen (though but a deacon) was full "of faith, and of the Holy Ghoſt;" and if any man taught in the church, he was to "ſpeak as an oracle "of God." Fleſh is to be ſilent there, and only the Spirit's voice to be heard in the ſpiritual building.

But

But now in the apoſtaſy, the miniſters there, are as wells without water, clouds without rain, who have only the ſhew of the thing after the fleſh, but not the truth of the thing after the Spirit; and ſo being not in the thing, nor in the Spirit, they deſpiſe the dominion, and ſpeak evil of the dignities which are of the Spirit, and for advantage ſake cry up the dominions and dignities which are of the earth.

In the apoſtles days the miniſters of the church were not of man, nor ſet over the flock by man; but made by God, and ſet over the flock as overſeers by him, Acts xx. 28. For the ſame Lord who gave apoſtles, prophets, and evangeliſts, gave alſo paſtors and teachers, Epheſ. iv. 11. And though the hands of the preſbytery were laid on thoſe that were made miniſters; yet that was not done ſuddenly, or lightly, but by the guidance of God's Spirit; and there went a gift and power of the Spirit along with it, according as Paul ſaid to Timothy, "Neglect not the gift "that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, "with the laying on of the hands of the preſbytery," 1 Tim. iv. 14. But now, in the declined fallen eſtate, there is no ſuch thing; but an empty form, a form of worſhip, a form of godlineſs, a form of miniſtry, a form of doctrine, a form of diſcipline; without the life, without the Spirit, without the power, from which the true form came, and whereby alone it could be preſerved.

This declined ſtate hath been a very ſink of iniquity, wherein the Chriſtian love hath not only grown cold, but hath been quite dead, and plucked up by the very roots; yea, wherein all that filthineſs which was ſprouting forth and getting up in the declining ſtate had reigned in power, defiling the very name of Chriſtianity, oppreſſing the good ſeed, and corrupting the earth. Read 2 Tim. iii. 2, &c. and ſee what a generation of Chriſtian profeſſors were to grow up (and did grow up) in the time of the apoſtaſy.

IV. Of

IV. Of the State of the Church in its Recovery; or what State the Church ſhall be in after it is recovered out of the Apoſtaſy.

THE ſtate of the church *after* the apoſtaſy, is to be like the ſtate it was in *before* the apoſtaſy (for purity, power, brightneſs, and glory, &c.); yea, ſhall it not be more glorious, after its coming through all this darkneſs, and ſhining over it, than it was before? The New Jeruſalem is to come down from God out of heaven; the bride is to be clothed and adorned as the Lamb's wife, meet for the delight of her huſband. The power and Spirit of the Lord, which cleanſeth away all this rubbiſh, will make his truth ſhine, his church ſhine, his ſuffering lambs (that come out of the great tribulation) ſhine more than ever before. The Lord God Omnipotent will take his great power unto him to reign, and will reign according to his power in the hearts of his children, and over the earth. He will break that which ſtands in his way with a rod of iron; and he will embrace and exalt that which boweth to and kiſſeth the ſceptre of his Son, who is to appear upon the holy hill of Sion: and the law is to go forth out of Sion, and the word of the Lord from Jeruſalem; the power whereof ſhall break down the power of iniquity, and bring up the ſuffering ſeed into the dominion and glory of life.

In this reſtored ſtate antichriſt ſhall be worſhipped no more, nor the beaſt, nor the dragon, who gave his power to the beaſt; but the Lord God ſhall be worſhipped and magnified over all. It ſhall be ſaid no more, *Who can make war with the beaſt? after the Lamb hath overcome him*; but, *Who is like to thee, O Lord, O King of ſaints, who haſt taken to thee thy great power, and haſt reigned, and doſt reign; who haſt brought down this lofty city, and trod it under the feet of the poor, and made*

made the ſteps of the needy to paſs over it; who haſt made it an heap, (the city fenced by all the might, wiſdom, and power of man) a ruinous heap, a place no more for thy dear children to be captived in and oppreſſed; but an habitation of dragons, and a cage of every unclean and noiſome bird for ever?—Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all nations ſhall come and worſhip before thee; for thy judgments are made manifeſt, Rev. xv. 4. Thou haſt judged down Babylon, which was exalted; thou haſt pitied Sion, which lay in the duſt for many ages and generations, and haſt raiſed up thine holy building again, and wilt give to thy children to be clothed, and to walk before thee in pure white linen (which is the righteous nature and Spirit of thy Son) for evermore; and the darkneſs ſhall never come over them again, but the beaſt, dragon, and falſe prophet ſhall be caſt into, and bound down in the lake; and the ſprings of life ſhall open, and whoſoever will may come freely, and drink of the water of life. And the people in heaven ſhall ſay, "Hallelujah! ſalvation, and glory, and honour, and "power unto the Lord our God."

And the voice of great multitudes, and the voice of many waters, and the voice of mighty thunders, ſhall ſay, "Hallelujah!" and ſhall be glad, and rejoice, and ſhall give honour to the Lord, for the bride's marriage with the Lamb, and for her rich adorning for her bridegroom. Yea, the earth ſhall rejoice, and the multitudes of the iſles be glad. Why ſo? Becauſe the Lord reigns, who is tender even of the earth, and hates the oppreſſing not only of his ſeed, but alſo of his creatures: for he will reign and judge in righteouſneſs, and tenderneſs, and much mercy, to all that is of him; and none ſhall feel his judgment and ſeverity, but that which is contrary to him, and joineth to his enemy. For the Lord will make war with that ſpirit, which is contrary to his life and nature, for ever and ever. And he that joineth to that ſpirit, ſhall find woe, miſery, and tribulation (tribu-

(tribulation and anguiſh ſhall light upon every ſoul that continues in the evil doing); but he that comes from under that ſpirit by the leadings of God's Spirit, bowing to and kiſſing the Son, ſhall taſte of the Father's love to the Son, and partake of the mercy, peace, and reconciliation which is treaſured up in him. Amen.

THE WAY of SALVATION in the Covenant of LIFE OPENED:

And ſome Stumbling-Blocks removed out of the Way of the Simple-hearted.

THERE are many whom the Lord hath raiſed up, in this day of the manifeſtation of his power, and of his everlaſting love, to bear witneſs to his truth; among whom I alſo (who was an outcaſt, and miſerable beyond expreſſion) have obtained mercy to partake of the virtue, life, and power of his precious truth (which redeems from the bondage of ſin and iniquity); and am alſo many times moved by the Lord to teſtify of that which he hath made known unto me, and given me to experience.

This brief touch ſprang in me by way of preface. Now to the thing itſelf.

The Father, in whom is the whole virtue and power of redemption, ſent his Son to gather the ſcattered and loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael; and not only ſo, but he gave him alſo for a light to the Gentiles, that he might be his ſalvation to the ends of the earth; and ſending him, he ſent his Spirit and power with him: for that which is begotten by the Father is not able to do the work, unleſs anointed and aſſiſted by the Father: therefore the Father, who ſent him to preach the goſpel, anointed him, and filled him with his

his Spirit, that he might preach the gospel according to that scripture, Isa. lxi. 1, 2, 3. "The Spirit of the "Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath "anointed me to preach good tidings to the meek; "he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to "proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening "the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim "the acceptable year of our Lord, and to comfort all "that mourn," &c.

Quest. *But how came these meek, these broken-hearted, these captives, these bound in prison, these mourners, to meet with the redemption and blessings which he is anointed to preach to them? Or which way do they come to receive and partake of them from him?*

Ans. In faith. This all his outward healings did signify, being thus dispensed. ("If thou wilt be-"lieve, thou shalt see the glory of God. Thy faith "hath made thee whole. O woman! great is thy "faith! be it unto thee according to thy faith"). And thus all his inward healings are bestowed upon, and received by, the soul; to wit, in the faith.

Quest. *But how came they to have faith? Or how cometh any man to have faith in the redeeming power?*

Ans. It is bestowed upon them by God, in the sense which is from him. His Word goeth forth from his mouth; there is a witness of him in the heart, towards which it reacheth. Now it reaching to the witness, immediately it brings into a sense, and in that sense begets faith; and being mixed with this faith (which is of its own begetting) in them that hear it, begins the work of life and redemption in that heart where it is not yet begun, or carries it on in that heart wherein it is already begun. Thus faith hath a work, a work from the beginning of the hearts's turning to God even to the end; which he that abides in the faith till the end, finds accomplished.

Object. *But this faith is bestowed on some few whom God hath elected, not on all men.*

Ans. God hath sent his gospel to be preached to every creature, and his Word is able to reach the witness,

neſs, and work ſenſe in every creature; and in whomſoever there is a ſenſe wrought, they liſtening to God in that ſenſe, he works faith in them; and waiting on the Word, hearkening to the Word, and ſtaying their minds there-through on the Lord, he will ſpeak peace to them, and keep them in peace, daily removing them more and more out of the reach and power of that which troubleth them.

Queſt. *Doth the new covenant lay all upon God, and require nothing of the creature? Or is there ſomething required by God of the creature, in and by virtue of the new covenant?*

Anſ. Conſider well; Doth not God require of the creature in the new covenant what he gives in the new covenant? Doth he not require the faith, and the exerciſing of that faith, which he himſelf works and gives in the ſenſe, from the power and demonſtration of his truth, to the ſoul? The new covenant requires more of the creature than ever the old did; but it requires them not of the creatures as weak in the fall, but as taught (ſtrengthened and enabled) to walk with God in and by virtue of the covenant. Yea, all manner of holineſs, and righteouſneſs of heart, life, and converſation is required in and by the new covenant: for as the Lord works out of all therein in the creature, ſo the creature works out all thereby in the Lord, according to that known ſcripture, "work out "your own ſalvation with fear and trembling: for it "is God which worketh in you, both to will and to "do of his good pleaſure." And as the creature is able to do nothing that is good of itſelf; ſo being grown up into the life and ability, which is of God, it is able to do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengtheneth it.

Queſt. *But why is it ſaid that Chriſt was anointed to preach the goſpel to the poor, the meek, the broken-hearted, the captives, the bound in priſon, the mourners (for want of righteouſneſs, life, and peace)? Did not God give his Son in love to all? Was he not made a ranſom and propitiation for all? Yea, was he not anointed to preach the goſpel*

goſpel to all? How then comes it here to be thus limited and reſtrained to ſome?

Anſ. It is true, God had a general reſpect to mankind, in the gift and anointing of his Son: but yet there are ſome in a better capacity to receive; already in the ſenſe of the want of him, and panting and longing after him. Yea, there are ſome, who are grievouſly ſick in ſoul, and deeply wounded in ſpirit; the ſadneſs and miſery of whoſe condition cries aloud for the help of the phyſician. Now the eye and heart of the Lord is more eſpecially towards theſe; and ſo he bids his prophets be inſtructing and comforting theſe, concerning the ſalvation, the healing, the oil of gladneſs, the Meſſiah to come; and when he comes, he ſends him up and down to ſeek out theſe, to keep company with theſe, to help and relieve theſe; having given him the tongue of the learned, to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to theſe weary diſtreſſed ones. Theſe are not like the common, rough, unhewn, knotty, rugged earth; but like earth prepared for the ſeed, and ſo eaſily and naturally receive it. The goſpel is preached to others at a diſtance; which, it is true, they may have, if they will hearken to it, and wait for it, and part with what muſt firſt be parted with; but they have a great way to travel thither. But theſe are near the kingdom; theſe are near that which opens, and lets in life; theſe are quickly reached to, melted, and brought into the ſenſe, in which with joy they receive the faith; and with the faith the power; which brings righteouſneſs and ſalvation to their ſouls. Though alſo the enemy is exceeding buſy, to darken, diſturb, and bow down theſe; that he might ſtill keep them in the doubts, in the fears, in the chains, in the fetters, in the priſon-houſe, from the liberty and healing which the word of the anointing brings.

Now mind. God is real towards all; he deſires the life and ſalvation of all; not the deſtruction of any one ſoul that ever he created (it is unnatural to him). And the way that he holds forth, he ſtands ready to meet any man in. Whom is it that he doth draw? And

And who is it that may not come in the drawing? Is not his word an hammer? And whom can it not break? Is it not fire? And whoſe corruption can it not burn up? Is it not water, wine, and blood? And whom cannot it waſh and nouriſh? Therefore, let no man think to lay the blame upon God, becauſe of his periſhing; for he will be deceived therein: and God will prove true, who ſaith, *Man's deſtruction is of himſelf*; and every man a liar, who layeth any blame on him, for not giving him further aſſiſtance with his power. Neither let him blame God for hardening him; for God hardeneth no man, but him who firſt refuſeth and grieveth the power and love which would melt and ſoften him. It is true; we are the clay, and God the potter: and may not the potter make what veſſels he will of his clay? This parable came from the Spirit of the Lord to Iſrael of old: but what uſe did the Lord make of it? Did he ſay to them, Do what ye will; ſome of you I will caſt off, and others of you I will ſhew mercy to; for I have determined ſo? Nay, not ſo: but I have this power over you; therefore do not provoke me. [Read Jer. xviii.] Was not God exceeding tender to that outward people, in that outward covenant? Did he ever give them up to pain and ſufferings, without great provocations on their parts? "He doth not afflict willingly, nor grieve the "children of men. Wherefore doth a living man "complain; a man for the puniſhment of his ſins? "Let us ſearch and try our ways, and turn again to "the Lord." And the Spirit of the Lord never failed to do what was his part, towards the turning them from iniquity, towards the Lord, in that covenant.

And when they did believe, conſent, and obey, and did eat the good of the land, was it not pleaſant and delightful to him? And when they provoked him to jealouſy, and drew down judgments upon their heads, was it not irkſome and painful to him? [Read Deut. v. 29. Iſa. v. Ezek. xx. Jer. xliv. 4. and chap. xxxi. 20. Iſa. lxiii. 7. to ver. 15.] And will God fail to do his part towards any man for the ſalvation of his ſoul,

ſoul, which is ſo precious, of ſo great concern, and the loſs whereof he knoweth to be ſo invaluable? No, no; the Spirit of God ſuffers, in every man upon the face of the earth, that ſins againſt him; and is grieved and wounded by their unjuſt and unrighteous converſations, from day to day, againſt the teſtimony of ſomewhat of him in them, which is contrary thereto. Now this is of a precious nature; and being ſo deſpiſed and rejected by men, can it be wondered that God doth not proceed to make it more manifeſt, and to work more in men by it? Nay, may it not rather be wondered that God doth continue to manifeſt it ſo much? What man could endure to behold a thing ſo precious in his eyes (as this is in God's) ſo continually abuſed by, and to ſuffer ſo much from, that which is ſo far beneath it, as God daily doth? Therefore, if there come a day of reckoning for this, with all men upon the face of the earth, (for who hath not had a talent from God; even of the pure eternal light in him, witneſſing in his heart and conſcience againſt the darkneſs?) there will be no cauſe of wondering at it. And is not this light and Spirit (which ſhines in all mens darkneſs in ſome meaſure, ſtirring and witneſſing againſt it, and endeavouring to perſuade and draw the mind from it) the very ſame, in nature and kind, with the light and Spirit of the Father, which appeared in that perſon of Chriſt? And, if hearkened unto, and followed, would it not bring into union and fellowſhip with him, and into a partaking of the benefit of all he did in that body? Yea, would not the Spirit reveal whatever is neceſſary to be known, to that ſoul which receives and follows it? Oh! what hath God done (in his rich and tender mercy towards all) for mankind! And how clear will he be, when he opens and manifeſts the righteouſneſs of his judgment! He will not clear himſelf after this manner; that he hath diſpoſed of them to deſtruction, according to the power and prerogative of his will; but that they have run headlong into deſtruction, againſt the light and leadings of his will and power; to which it is natural

to ſave, but not to deſtroy. That is the act which is proper to another nature and ſpirit, but ſtrange to his.

Object. *But could not* God *ſave any if he would? Who can reſiſt his will or his power? Who can ſtop or reſiſt him in the work of redemption, or deſtruction?*

Anſ. God can ſo put forth his will and power, as none can reſiſt. Yea, the will and power of God (which offereth to ſave, and ſtandeth ready to ſave) will bring deſtruction upon all that ſo dally with it, as to neglect and let paſs the day of their viſitation: and thus none can reſiſt his will, or his power. But in the way wherein he appeareth, and hath choſen to work out life and ſalvation, Satan, and man's corrupt heart and mind, may and do often reſiſt the will and power of the Lord. Now that which reſiſteth, is not of God, but againſt him; yet it is the patience of the Lord, to ſuffer it. I find drawings in my heart from God, or I durſt not open theſe things. For I dare not hold out to men what the Lord hath given me to know and experience, but only what he giveth and chooſeth for me to hold out: and that will be life to them that receive it. But if I ſhould hold out any thing of myſelf, that would not reach to life, but only feed the wrong part in men; and ſo help to build up that, which God will again throw down, before he ſaves that ſoul which is built up with the knowledge of things after this manner.

There is ſomewhat ſprings up in my heart, which may perhaps open this thing further to the minds of ſome.

Cain was the firſt wicked man that we read of; and how tender was God towards him! even him that ſacrificed not after the Spirit, but after the fleſh, and ſlew his brother Abel? Now can any man lay Cain's wickedneſs either upon the will, or upon the decree and counſel of God? Might he not have done well? Might he not have ſacrificed to God in the faith, as well as his brother Abel? And if he had done well, and offered in the faith, had he not found forgiveneſs and

and acceptance with the Lord? God accepteth no man's perſon; God rejecteth no man's perſon; but there is a ſeed he hath choſen; and to gather man into this ſeed, is his delight and work; as it is the delight, nature, and work of another ſpirit to ſcatter from this ſeed.

Now in this ſeed he doth accept, and not out of it. Yea, in this ſeed ſhall all the families of the earth be bleſſed, as they are gathered into, and abide in it. And this ſeed is a word nigh in the mouth and heart, both of Jew and Gentile; which, as it is hearkened to, writes the law of the Spirit of life in the heart, either of Jew or Gentile. And as they become ſons, ſo the Spirit of the Father is poured out upon them; even the Spirit of adoption, which crieth *Abba, Father*, either in Jew or Gentile. And this is the goſpel of the kingdom, which is preached more ſparingly, or abundantly, by the mouth of the ſeed, as the Lord pleaſeth.

For God's power, wiſdom, mercy, love, goodneſs, patience, long-ſuffering, &c. is his own; and he may ſow of it, or exerciſe it, more ſparingly or abundantly, as he pleaſeth. Yea, he doth exerciſe it more abundantly towards the veſſels of mercy; ſo that the cauſe of their ſalvation doth not ſo much ariſe from their embracing of mercy, as from God's exerciſing of it. He viſiteth nations as he pleaſeth, and perſons in nations as he pleaſeth; and who may ſay unto him, *What doſt thou? Why art thou ſo good and kind here?* Or, *Why art thou ſo ſharp and ſevere there?* But ſtill in the way, and according to the path, of the covenant, doth the Lord walk, in and towards all: and his mercy endureth for ever towards the ſeed of the righteous, and his juſtice and indignation for ever towards the ſeed of the evil-doer: and man (ſimply conſidered) is not either of theſe; but as he is gathered into, and brought forth in, the root and ſpirit of either of theſe. Now every man hath a day for the life of his ſoul; and power and mercy is near him,

to help him to travel from death to life. Happy is he, who is taught of God to make uſe of it.

And let not men puzzle themſelves about the myſtery of *election* and *reprobation*; which cannot be underſtood by ſuch as are out of the thing wherein it is made manifeſt. Only thus, at preſent: Pharaoh and Iſrael, Eſau and Jacob, Iſhmael and Iſaac, &c. were parables, ſignifying ſomewhat inward. What was Pharaoh? Was he not the oppreſſor of God's Iſrael? What was Eſau? Was he not the firſt birth, which ſold the birth-right and inheritance? What was Iſhmael? Was he not the birth after the fleſh? Theſe are rejected, and caſt off by God for ever; and the ſpiritual Iſrael, the ſpiritual Jacob, the ſpiritual Iſaac, are accepted.

Shall I ſpeak out this thing yet more plain? Why thus then: it is not the creature which is rejected by its Maker; but ſomewhat in the creature, and the creature in that. Nor is it the creature (ſimply) which is elected; but ſomewhat in the creature, and the creature in that. And as any man comes into that, the election is begun in him: and as any man abides in that, he abides in the election: and as that is made ſure to any man, his calling and election are made ſure to him. But as any man departs from that, he departs from the election into the reprobation: and going on in that into the full impenitency and hardneſs, he will for ever miſs of the election, and the reprobation, and ſealing up to condemnation, will be made ſure to him. For God is no reſpecter of perſons; but every where, he that receiveth his holy ſeed, and therein worketh righteouſneſs, is accepted of him. And he that receiveth the wicked ſeed, and therein worketh wickedneſs and unrighteouſneſs, is with it rejected.

Object. *But* (may the honeſt heart ſay) *this may be truth, for aught I know; but indeed I did not apprehend things to be ſo: for I thought man and his works had been wholly excluded by the covenant of grace; but this ſeems to take both him and them in upon a conſideration.*

Anſ.

Anſ. Man is wholly excluded the covenant of grace, as in himſelf; as he ſtands in himſelf, and in his own ability, out of the newneſs of life and ability which is of the new covenant. But he is not excluded as he is renewed, and receiveth a new being, life, virtue, and ability, in the new covenant. But here much is required of him; and whatever he thus doth, is owned, acknowledged, and accepted by God. Here the true Jew hath praiſe of God. He is commended for his faith, and for his obedience in the faith: for his loving the Lord his God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himſelf: for his waſhing his garments in the blood of the Lamb, and keeping them clean in the ſame blood, while others defile theirs: for his merciful nature and actions to Chriſt in his members, while others are rough and cruel: for his watching againſt ſnares and temptations, while others are running into them: for his crucifying that in himſelf, which others feed in themſelves: yea, for his denying and turning from all ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, even of the fleſh, eyes, and pride of life; all which are not of the Father, (whom he is born of, and ſeeks after) but of the ſpirit of the world, which the earthly-minded man is born of, and ſeeks to pleaſe. So that (mark) though man is excluded in his corrupt nature and ſtate, yet not the new man, not man in the regeneration. But man muſt be regenerated; and thus man muſt enter into the covenant of life; and thus man muſt abide and be found in the covenant of life, in the nature, in the righteouſneſs, in the holineſs, in the power thereof, if ever God own him.

Object. *But this ſeems to lay difference on man's act, and not wholly on the grace of God. For the grace, in itſelf, is equally powerful towards all; but it is my receiving of it, which maketh it effectual unto me; which others not receiving, it is not ſo to them.*

Anſ. The grace, in itſelf, is of its own nature every where. This is true. And that it hath power in it every where, and that this power is over and above ſin; this is true alſo. But yet there is a greater or

leſſer proportion of it given, according to the pleaſure and good-will of the giver: and according to the meaſure of it, (which is freely given) and the ſoul's growth therein, ſo is the power of it manifeſted in the heart.

Now the difference in every man is by the grace. Not of himſelf: for he can do nothing that is good, as of himſelf: but only by the grace; which is alone able to work that which is good in him, and to cauſe him to work in it. Yet thus it is: as the grace reacheth to him, draweth him, quickening and cauſing him, in the virtue, life, and obedience of the grace, to anſwer the grace; ſo doth the work thereof go on in him. And there is matter of condemnation to him, who doth not anſwer the grace; and there is matter of juſtification and praiſe to him, who doth anſwer the grace. Yet this whole ability ariſing not from himſelf, but from the grace, the acknowledgment of what is effected thereby, doth of right and due belong to the grace. And therefore they who are juſtified, ſanctified, and crowned by the grace, do of right and due caſt their crowns at the feet of the Lamb, at the throne of grace; giving honour and glory to him who is worthy, and to his grace which hath wrought all in them.

Now if any man would know this thing groundedly and certainly, let him not run into diſputes of the mind and brain, but come to heart-experience. Haſt thou ever found the work of God's grace in thy heart? Haſt thou found thy heart, at any time, believe and obey, in and through the ſtrength of the grace? Haſt thou found thy heart at another time negligent of, or rebellious againſt, the grace? When thou wert rebellious, wert not thou condemned, and that juſtly too? When thou didſt believe and obey, to whom did the honour thereof belong? to thee, or to the grace? Canſt thou anſwer this? Why, as it is in thyſelf, between thee when obeying and diſobeying, the ſame is the ſtate of the caſe between godly and wicked men. There was a difference between thee when thou obeyedſt

edſt the grace, and when thou diſobeyedſt it: ſo is there between the unregenerate and regenerate. When thou obeyedſt not, that which called for obedience condemned thee; ſo it doth them. When thou obeyedſt, thou didſt ſenſibly feel the praiſe was not thine, but belonged to the grace which wrought in thee; ſo is it alſo in the regenerate, in whom the Lord works by his grace, and who work out their ſalvation through him, and make their calling and election ſure in him. Leave brain-knowledge, and come to true ſenſe, (where the myſteries of God are made manifeſt) and this will ſoon be eaſy and clear to thee. But theſe things were never intended by God to be found out by man's diſputing wiſdom: for God (who giveth the knowledge) hideth them from that part, and giveth them to the innocent ſimple birth of his own Spirit.

Object. *But when the Father draweth, can any man reſiſt or hold off? Doth not the power of the Lord make any man willing, whom he exerciſeth his power towards? And is it not thereupon ſaid, "Thy people ſhall be willing "in the day of thy power?"*

Anſ. The power of the Lord is great, and hath dominion over all evil ſpirits that can tempt, and over all the corruptions, backſlidings, and withdrawings of the heart. But the Father doth not ſave man by ſuch an abſolute act of his power (for then there would need no more to be done, but an immediate tranſlating of a man from death to life; which if the Lord pleaſe to do, nothing could come between to hinder); but the power of the Lord works in and according to the way that he hath appointed. And in this way the devil hath liberty and power to tempt from, oppoſe, and reſiſt the work of God: and they that hearken to him, and enter into the temptation and ſnare which he lays, let his power in upon them, and withdraw from the virtue, operation, and ſtrength of the power of God. Yet for all this, the Lord not only begins his work, but alſo carries it on in the day of his power; giving not only to will, but alſo to do

what is right and pleaſing in his eyes; but ſtill in and according to his own way and covenant.

Object. *And ſo whereas ſome men ſay, If God put forth his power to ſave, and the devil interrupt and ſtop his work; then it ſeems that the devil is ſtronger than God. Is the devil ſtronger than God, ſay they? If he be not, how can he reſiſt and withſtand him in the work of his power?*

Anſ. Nay; the devil is not ſtronger than God; though he is very ſtrong. But if the heart let in the enemy, grieve the Spirit, beat back his power in the way wherein it hath appointed to work, the devil may be more prevalent with him than the power of God. But in thoſe that believe, and become obedient and ſubject to the power of God, his power is far ſtronger in them to defend and carry on his work, than the power of the devil is to work againſt and hinder it.

There are objections alſo relating to free-will, and falling from grace, which ſtick much in the ſpirits of many, and they cannot get over them; but it hath pleaſed the Lord to clear up theſe things to us, and to ſatisfy our hearts concerning them, ſo that with us there is no difficulty nor doubt about them.

As touching free-will: We know, from God, that man in his fallen eſtate is ſpiritually dead, and hath no free-will to good; but his underſtanding and will are both darkened and captivated by the enemy. But in Chriſt there is freedom, and in his word there is power and life: and that reaching to the heart, looſeneth the bands of the enemy, and begetteth not only a freedom of mind towards good, but an inclination, deſires, and breathings after it. Thus the Father draws, and thus the ſoul (feeling the drawing) anſwers in ſome meaſure; and the ſoul, thus coming, is welcomed by Chriſt, and accepted of the Father. But for all this, the enemy will tempt this ſoul; and the ſoul may hearken to, let in, and enter into the temptation, and ſo draw back from the plough to which it put its hand. "Now if any man "draw back, my ſoul ſhall have no pleaſure in him," ſaith

ſaith the Lord. "And he that putteth his hand to "the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the "kingdom of heaven."

So concerning falling away; The Lord ſhews us what it is that is apt to fall, and what cannot fall. Chriſt cannot fall; and that which is gathered into him, ſtands and abides in him, (and ſo partakes of his preſervation) cannot fall. There is no breaking in upon that power, which preſerves in the way that it hath appointed: but there is a running and periſhing out of the way. Out of the limits of the covenant, the preſervation and power of the covenant is not witneſſed. But in coming to Chriſt in the drawings of the Father, in the ſenſe and faith which he begets, and abiding with him that drew, in the ſenſe and faith which he daily and freſhly begets anew (for he reneweth covenant and mercy daily, and keepeth covenant and mercy for ever) in this is the power felt, the preſervation felt; in this the Father's hand encompaſſeth the ſoul, which none can pluck it out of. Now he that feels and experiences theſe things every day, that ſees and feels daily how he can fall, and how he cannot fall; how he meets with the preſervation, and how he miſſes of the preſervation; how he abides in the pure power, (which is the limits of this holy covenant) and how he wanders out of this power, into the limits of another covenant, ſpirit, and power; he knows theſe things, how they are indeed; whereas other men (who are not exerciſed in the thing) do but gueſs at them; ſtriving to comprehend them in that part which God hath ſhut out of them.

Now mind a parable, with which I ſhall conclude this.

Though the natural and outwardly-viſible ſun be riſen ever ſo high upon the earth, yet he that is naturally blind cannot ſee it, nor partake of the light thereof. So alſo, though the ſpiritual Sun, the Sun of

of righteouſneſs, the Sun of the inward world, be riſen ever ſo high, and appear brightly in ever ſo many clouds; yet they that are ſpiritually blind cannot diſcern it, nor reap the benefits of his light, nor partake of the healing which is under his wings.

SOME QUERIES CONCERNING THE NEW COVENANT.

Query 1. WHAT is the covenant of hell and death, which muſt of neceſſity be broken, before a ſoul can be gathered into the covenant of life?

Query 2. What is the covenant of life and peace, into which God gathers the ſoul?

Query 3. How doth God gather? By a mere act of power, which none can reſiſt? or in a way wherein his power (though much reſiſted) ſhall prevail for the ſalvation of thoſe, who are faithful in the covenant; who come to Chriſt, abide in Chriſt, reſiſt and fight (in Chriſt) againſt all that is contrary to his nature and Spirit, and overcome through him?

Query 4. Are there any terms in this covenant? Or can there be any terms in this covenant, ſuitable to the nature of the covenant? Is believing in the power, as abſolutely required in this covenant, as obedience to the law was under the covenant of the law?

Query

Query 5. If faith in the power, and obedience to the power that redeems, be required as terms in the new covenant; yet if they be not required of the creature in its own capacity and ability, but as ſtrengthened and enabled by the virtue, life, and power of the covenant, are they not free terms, noble terms, worthy and becoming a free covenant?

Query 6. Is not this the goſpel, or new covenant, That whoſoever believeth, and receiveth the baptiſm of the Holy Ghoſt and fire, (ſuffering in the fleſh, and having his ſins and corruptions purged away by the ſpirit of judgment, and by the ſpirit of burning, and ſo walketh no longer after the fleſh, but after the Spirit) I ſay, is not this the goſpel, or new covenant, that he that thus believeth, and is thus baptized, ſhall not be condemned with the world, but juſtified and ſaved by that Spirit and power which cleanſeth him?

Query 7. Doth God write his laws in mens hearts, or put his fear therein, or his Spirit within them, cauſing them to walk in his ways and ſtatutes, and to keep his judgments, &c. I ſay, doth God do this to men out of the faith? Is not the work of ſalvation begun in the faith, and carried on and perfected in the faith? And he that maketh ſhipwreck of faith, and of a good conſcience, can he groundedly hope to have the work of ſalvation carried on in him?

Query 8. Doth not God beget, increaſe, and perfect the faith, which is available unto ſalvation? Is any man accepted in the faith, which is of his own nature? Or is the acceptation in and through the faith which is of the Son's nature?

Query 9. May the temptations of the devil, with a man's hearkening thereto, hinder God's begetting faith in him or no? Or if it be begotten, can they hinder the growth and increaſe of it?

Query 10. When God draws, muſt a man neceſſarily come to the Son? Or may the devil ſo tempt, and he ſo hearken thereto, as that his coming to the Son may be hindered, notwithſtanding the Father's drawing?

Query

Query 11. Is there not juſtification to them that receive the ſeed, to them that obey the light? And is there not condemnation to them that refuſe the ſeed, and obey not the goſpel of its ſalvation?

Query 12. Do men periſh for want of power from God? Or through their cleaving to another power, and refuſing the ſtrength of that which is over that other power; whoſe hand would help their ſouls, and bring them through and over it, did they receive it, and cleave to it in the way the Lord hath appointed?

Query 13. They that receive the power, believe in it, and live; do they do it by their own ſtrength? Or in the ſtrength and virtue which flows from the power, which enlivens, draws, and makes able to follow?

Query 14. Thoſe that are weak as to the power, and in whom the enemy and corruptions are ſtrong; is the defect on God's part? or on his covenant's part? Or in the way of life, which he hath pitched upon as ſufficient to redeem and deliver fallen man by? Or is God (and his covenant and way of life) wholly clear of the defect, and reſts it wholly on them?

AN EXHORTATION to ALL PEOPLE,

But more eſpecially to SUCH as are

DESOLATE and DISTRESSED.

NOW is the acceptable time, now is the day of ſalvation. Now is the life ariſen, and now the light ſhines, to guide out of the darkneſs and death, into the land of the living. Oh! awake, ye that ſleep in the duſt of the earth; ariſe up from among the dead, and Chriſt ſhall give you light, to walk along in the path of the living! Come to him whom the Father hath ſealed; who is life, and who giveth life freely to all that come; yea, abundantly, to thoſe that wait upon him, and walk faithfully in his covenant. Oh! therefore come into covenant with him; mind the words of his lips, which beget ſenſe, and in that ſenſe his life ſtirs, and in the ſtirrings of his life the drawings of the Father are felt. And when the Father draws, he whom-ever he draws may come; and him who comes, Chriſt will in no wiſe caſt out, but receive into his arms, and defend by his power, againſt that which would draw or force back from him into perdition. Therefore hearken to the little movings and ſtirrings in you, after that which is eternal; for any deſire which is in truth after him, he will not quench (it is his nature to cheriſh it); but he will be a ſtrength and relief to the ſoul, againſt that which would quench and put out the breathings and pantings after him, that it might ſtill hold the ſoul in bondage and

and captivity. And, people, mind this (it is a true teſtimony). The door of life is now ſo opened, by him who hath the key and power, that whoever will may enter. For the power of life is ariſen, againſt the power of death and the deſtroyer of the ſoul: ſo that great, yea, very great advantage is there in this day, to all that are willing to follow the Leader and Captain of ſalvation, out of the land of captivity. Mind but his viſits, and be faithful in the ſtrength which flows from him; and nothing ſhall hinder thy ſoul from overcoming what ſtands in thy way, to ſtop thee from attaining the eternal crown and inheritance of life.

And as for you afflicted mourners, who are ſeeking the way to Sion, bewailing the abſence of your beloved, in whoſe preſence is life and redemption, reſurrection from the dead, and victory over ſin; yea, all that your hearts have deſired, or can deſire: what ſhall I ſay to you? O my friends, and dear brethren! May I ſpeak a little freely to you concerning the Lord Jeſus? How that he was born of the virgin Mary, according to the fleſh, fulfilled his miniſtry and ſervice in the fleſh, and was taken up to God; and how that the ſame Lord Jeſus was afterwards born in Spirit, of the ſpiritual woman the church; even ſo born as to rule all nations with an iron rod; and yet did not come forth to rule the nations, but was taken up to God again, and hath not ſince appeared in that Spirit, power, and dominion; but only in ſuch a ſtrength of life, as might enable his witneſſes to bear witneſs to him all along the apoſtaſy, until the church ſhould come out of the wilderneſs, and the man-child appear again.

And now hear the joyful news. The apoſtaſy is ended. Mark; I do not ſay the apoſtaſy is generally ended. No, no; there are many woes, plagues, judgments, and terrible thunders to come upon perſons, and nations, before they feel it ended. But it is ended in ſome veſſels, which are upon the earth. The man of ſin, that wicked one, the ſon of perdition,

tion, hath been discovered by the Spirit of the Lord; chased, consumed, and destroyed by the breath of his mouth, and by the brightness of his appearance in some. Yea, the church is come out of the wilderness, and the man-child is come along with her; for she is not come without her beloved, but leaning upon her beloved; and he is known ruling with his golden sceptre, and with his iron rod battering down the corrupt, selfish, stubborn, earthly spirit, and raising up that which is meek, tender, lowly, and lay bowed down and oppressed.

Now as Christ said, preaching in the days of his flesh, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your "ears," Luke iv. 21. Was it not then fulfilled outwardly among the outward Jews? Were there any sick, or weak, or blind, or lame, or lepers, or possessed with devils, whom he was not ready to cure? And did he not go about doing good, and seeking them out to cure them? So may it not now be said in the Spirit and power of the Lord, among the spiritual Jews; this day is this scripture fulfilled spiritually in your ears. Yea, what he did then outwardly, is known in spirit to be done among you inwardly and spiritually. How many that were before blind do now see? That were before deaf do now hear? That were formerly lame do now walk? That were very leprous are now cleansed? That were very dead are now raised? That were quite dumb do now speak? And the poor, the empty, the naked are now clothed, and filled with the riches and treasures of the everlasting kingdom? May it not be truly said, by many poor distressed hearts, that the wilderness and solitary place is now glad, because that which once was parched with drought and barrenness, now feels the living springs, and the breaking forth of the pure clear river of life, the streams whereof make glad the city of God, and cause melody in the heart to the Lord? Where is the envious, cruel, dragonish nature, may some say? Yea, where is the place where dragons lay? Is there not a new creation? a new heaven, a new earth; and are not all things

things become new therein? Are not the old things of the night, and of the darkneſs, paſſed away, and all things become new in this day, which the Lord hath made, in the hearts which have received and been ſubject to his light?

And now what hinders, but that ye alſo ſhould lift up your heads, and ſee the coming of the Son of man in the clouds wherein he comes, and partake of the redemption, virtue, and power of his appearance? What are the clouds wherein he comes? Is his coming outward? Or are the clouds outward? Or is his coming inward and ſpiritual in ten thouſands of his ſaints? Did not Enoch ſee that he was to come ſo to judge the world? Doth he not come to be glorified in his ſaints? Are not they to judge the world? They in him, he in them? Oh! read aright; read with the Spirit, and with the underſtanding which is thereof; and then the truth of the letter will be manifeſt and ſhine to you. There is nothing ſtands in your way, but want of a ſpiritual eye to ſee his ſpiritual appearance in others, (and ſo to wait for it in yourſelves) even the eye of faith, which ſees the inviſible power and glory, as the Lord openeth it and maketh manifeſt to it.

Now this I have to ſay to you, in true ſenſe and underſtanding. Come down to the Gentile's light, come down to that which God hath diſpenſed to the Gentile, as well as to the Jew; which is *the word* (or commandment) *nigh in the mouth and heart*. This hath been the loweſt of all, deſpiſed by all; and this is in the heart of God to exalt over all; for it is above all. The loweſt in its deſcent from the Father; the higheſt in its aſcent to the Father. This is the thing which man ran from, when the veil came over him; which all the ſhadows of the law were to point out and ſignify. And as man is brought again to this, life ſprings in him, and the powerful redemption of the eternal word is witneſſed by him. Yea, he that hears the voice of this, though he were ever ſo dead in treſpaſſes and ſins, ſhall feel life ſpring in him, and the covenant of life inwardly revealed, which by the pure faith and obedience

obedience is the entrance into, and the abiding in. And this is the one truth, the one pure eternal word and way to the Father, which was from the beginning, and remains the ſame unto the end. This is the door, at which all hitherto have entered into life, at which all do ſtill enter, and there is no other. Bleſſed for ever is he, who hath made it ſo manifeſt and plain in this our day; and bleſſed are they that ſee it, and enter into life at it!

A

Viſit of tender and upright Love

TO SUCH AS,

Among the many Profeſſions and Ways of Religion, retain any Meaſure of Sincerity of Heart, and true Deſires after the LORD.

THE main thing in religion is to receive a principle of life from God, whereby the mind may be changed, and the heart made able to underſtand the myſteries of his kingdom, and to ſee and walk in the way of life; and this is the travail of the ſouls of the righteous, that they may abide, grow up, and walk with the Lord in this principle; and that others alſo, who breathe after him, may be gathered into, and feel the virtue of, the ſame principle.

But there is one that ſtands in the way to hinder this work of the Lord, who with great ſubtilty ſtrives to keep ſouls in captivity, and to prejudice them againſt the precious living appearances of the redeeming power of the Lord.

One great way whereby he doth this is, by raiſing up in them a fear leſt they ſhould be deceived and betrayed, and inſtead of obtaining more, loſe that little of God which they have. With this was I exerciſed long; and ſtill, when life ſtirred in my heart, then this fear was raiſed in me; ſo that I durſt not in judgment cloſe with what ſecretly in ſpirit I felt to be of God, it having a true touch of his quickening, warming, convincing, enlivening virtue in it.

Now that this ſnare may be eſcaped by ſuch as breathe after the Lord, oh! let them wait, mourn, and cry to him, that he would write his pure fear in their hearts, and teach them when to fear, and how to fear, and what to fear; and in that (or as that is brought forth in them) they ſhall ſee that they have more cauſe to fear their preſent ſtate, than to fear that which, in the quickening warmth and virtue of God, comes to make a change in their preſent ſtate; yea, they ſhall then ſee how the enemy now cauſeth them to fear, where no fear is; and keepeth them from fearing, where the fear is. For what is the ground of fear now? This is the great thing that they ſhould fear, leſt they ſhould not hear the call of the Spirit of the Lord out of Babylon; out of that part of Babylon out of which they have not yet travelled; and leſt they ſhould not hear and mind the call of his Spirit unto Sion, the holy mount of God, towards and unto which he leadeth his people, in this day of the revelation and manifeſtation of his glorious love and power.

Oh! therefore, my friends, ye that long after the Lord, ye that deſire to feel the power of his truth, wait for the principle of life from him to be revealed in you, and the pure fear which is therefrom, that ye may feel the Lord thereby, and therein (even in and through that principle) writing his fear, his pure fear, his holy fear, his powerfully-preſerving fear, in your hearts; that ye may know the way to him, the ſeed (which is the way) may come and join to him therein, and never depart from him. The fear of the Lord,

from

from the principle of his life, will (without fail) effect this in you as ye receive it from the Lord; but the other fear, the fear which the enemy begets, will not do it; but will be a bar and fore ſtop in your way, till the Lord, by his holy power, through his tender mercy, remove it from you.

And now anſwer me one queſtion uprightly, as in God's ſight, from whom it is in my heart to propound it to you.

Are you come to Sion, or are ye travelling thitherward rightly and truly? Have ye ever known any of the travellers, that ye have been acquainted with, that could in truth ſay, that they were come to Sion? The Chriſtians, in the primitive times, were come to Sion, and they were acquainted and dwelt with God and Chriſt there; and knew Jeruſalem, the heavenly building, the city of the living God. Oh! where are ye? Nay, are ye yet come out of Babylon? Do ye yet know the wilderneſs, the intricate paſſages therein, wherethrough God alone can lead the ſoul? Oh! depart ye, depart ye from your preſent ſtations, (in the leadings of God's Spirit) unleſs ye can ſay, in the true unerring light, that they are your reſt, your ſoul's true reſt, even the everlaſting kingdom, which the primitive Chriſtians received, (and into which they found entrance) which could not be ſhaken.

And, friends, let me tell you one thing further, (for my heart is at this preſent opened to you by the Lord) that as the ſoul (in its travels) comes to Sion, the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus is witneſſed, which makes free from the law of ſin and death. And then there is no more ſuch a crying out of the body of ſin as there was before; but a bleſſing of him who hath delivered, and daily doth deliver, from it: yea, the body of ſin is known and felt to be put off, and Chriſt put on in the ſtead thereof. For, my friends, there are ſeveral ſtates witneſſed by the ſoul, in its true and ſenſible travels towards the holy land. As for inſtance:

1. There is a ſtate of Egyptian darkneſs and bondage, in which the power of death reigns and rules in the heart, ſubjecting it to ſin and death. And here the ſoul is in the grave, and under death, captivity, and bondage, in the midſt of all its profeſſions of religion, and talk of God and Chriſt, and reading ſcriptures, and obſerving ordinances and duties, &c.

2. There is a wilderneſs-ſtate, wherein the ſtrength of captivity is ſomewhat broken, and the heart drawn to mind the leadings of life, and to follow after the Lord through the trials, through the preparations, through the ſeveral exerciſes which the Lord ſeeth good to exerciſe it with.

And here the mercy and goodneſs of the Lord is experienced, and the deceitfulneſs and treachery of the heart. This is the place of humiliation and breaking, wherein the ſoul daily feels how untoward and unaccuſtomed it is to the yoke, which ſhould break the ſpirit, and ſubdue it to God. Here the Lord ſhews the ſoul what its heart is, that he might humble it, and do it good in the latter end. Here the very law of God appears weak, through the ſtrength of the fleſh, which is not yet ſubdued. Now here is mourning, and groaning, and crying to the Lord night and day, both becauſe of the violence and multitude of the enemies, and becauſe of the naughtineſs, diſtruſt, and unbelief of the heart.

3. There is a ſtate of reſt, a ſtate of peace, a ſtate of life, a ſtate of power, a ſtate of grace, a ſtate of dominion, in the life, and through the power of the Lord, wherein the law of life is manifeſted in dominion in the heart over the law of ſin and death. There is an everlaſting kingdom, wherein God and Chriſt reign, in which God treads Satan down under the feet of the ſoul, and makes the ſoul a king and a prieſt in the Son of his love; and the ſoul feels it is one with, and accepted in, the beloved.

Now, friends, that ye may know this kingdom, travel faithfully towards it; feel and come into the reign of Chriſt in it; ſit down in the heavenly places

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in Chriſt Jeſus, and inherit ſubſtance; know the gathering to Chriſt in the name, and ſit down in the name, where the enemy cannot touch you; but feel the preſervation and powerful life and dominion of that ſeed which is over the enemy, and wherein and whereby the Lord ſcatters the enemy, bruiſing the ſerpent's head, and anointing the ſoul with the oil of gladneſs, and clothing it with the beautiful garments of his righteouſneſs and ſalvation; and that ye may know the precious and glorious building of life in the Spirit, even of the holy houſe and city of God, where the walls are ſalvation, and the gates praiſe. For this end it is in my heart from the Lord to write theſe things unto you; and the Lord God of his mercy open the door of entrance to you into theſe things; for there is but one door of life, and there is not another; which door is Chriſt the ſeed; which ſeed is revealed within, there to break the wiſdom, ſtrength, and head of the ſerpent; and ſo far as he breaks it there, redemption and freedom is witneſſed from it, and no further.

Oh! that ye might receive an underſtanding from the Lord, and be taught by him to deny and part with the underſtanding which is not of him, that ye might ſee things (from him, and in his light) which ye have not yet ſeen; and conſider aright of that, which the enemy hitherto, by his ſubtilty, hath prejudiced you againſt.

And now as for us, who experience the truth as it is in Jeſus, and with the Lord our God in his light, and by virtue of his life and love ſhed abroad in our hearts; I ſay, what is it to us to be judged by you in your day as perſons that deny Chriſt, deny ſcriptures, deny ordinances, deny duties, &c.? We are ſatisfied in our hearts as touching your judgment, knowing from the Lord what it is in you that thus judgeth of us, even the ſame thing that judged amiſs of Chriſt (in the Scribes, Phariſees, and profeſſing Jews) in the days of his fleſh. And indeed that in you can never judge

aright; but is to be judged, condemned, and deſtroyed by the life and power of the Lord.

And oh! that ye knew (ſenſibly knew) what is to live, and what is to die in you, that ye might feel the riſing of your ſouls out of the grave, through the immortal ſeed of God, and the bringing of all your wiſdom and knowledge of the things of God (which ye hold, and make uſe of out of the compaſs and limits of his holy life and covenant) into death.

For, friends, let me tell you, that which hath been parted with (for the kingdom's ſake, and the righteouſneſs thereof) in ſome, was more precious than what ye hold ſo ſtiffly, and ſo magnify in your own thoughts and reaſonings againſt the truth. Yea, that which was once of high eſteem, and very glorious in our eyes, is now become as droſs and dung, for the excellency of the pure living knowledge of, and fellowſhip with, Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord; and if ye had the true meaſure and balance to weigh things in, ye would acknowledge it: but the letter, and literal ordinances and duties, and apprehenſions of things out of the life, kills you, and keeps you under the veil, and from the ſight of the things which are within the veil.

Oh! that God would rend the veil in you! Oh! that God would give you the feeling of, and union with, that whereby he rends the veil! Oh! that he would humble you, and bring down the mighty from his ſeat of judgment in you, to be judged and abaſed, and exalt the meek and lowly into that which is his proper place!

Oh! that ye might feel the work of God, even the redemption of the ſoul, begun and carried on by him with power in your hearts! Then would ye know Chriſt indeed, the ſcriptures indeed, the ordinances indeed, the duties indeed, the everlaſting ſabbath, the everlaſting worſhip; even the ſubſtance of all that was ſhadowed out under the law, and ſit down under the wing of the Almighty, from whence the power, the life, the virtue, the healing, drops into the ſoul.

And

And now, to give a little touch at thoſe things beforementioned, which ye ſo ſtumble at, a little to help to remove them from your ſpirits, if it pleaſe the Lord.

1. We do not deny that Chriſt which died at Jeruſalem; but own him, and no other: and own what he did, his obedience to the Father always, and in all things; his ſufferings in the virtue and power of the Father, and the value of them with the Father. This the Lord our God teacheth us to own, and to bleſs the name of the Lord, for him who is the Captain, and worker out of our ſalvation; a meaſure of whoſe life and power we have received, and embrace in our hearts; and in this is He, the fulneſs, made manifeſt to us; and we, through this, and by this, and in this, ingrafted into him; and ſo come to partake of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of the olive-tree. Yea, this we certainly know, that Chriſt was not only made manifeſt in that body of fleſh, but is alſo made manifeſt in our mortal fleſh, as we are gathered into his life, and his life brought forth in us. And he is not only antichriſt, that denieth Chriſt's appearance in that body of fleſh; but he that denieth him (the hope of glory) in his ſaints, his ſpiritual body. Yea, I beſeech you conſider, whether it hath been the work of antichriſt all along the apoſtaſy to deny the appearance of Chriſt in that body of fleſh, or to deny the appearance of his life and Spirit in the fleſh of his ſaints? "We "know (ſaith the apoſtle John) that the Son of God "is come, and hath given us an underſtanding to "know him that is true." How was he come? Was not he that was with them come in them? Did he not live in them, act in them, ſpeak in them? And did not they that were of God hear the voice of Chriſt, the voice of the Shepherd in them? But they which were not of God, which were not the ſheep, could not hear the voice of Chriſt in his apoſtles and believers; could not own him come in their fleſh, though they could preach the ſame Chriſt in words, and own

his coming in that body of flesh which he had appeared in, 1 John iv. 6.

2. We do indeed really, heartily, singly, as in God's sight, own the scriptures; the scriptures written by the prophets and holy men of God under the law; the scriptures written by the evangelists and apostles in the time of the gospel; and we read them with delight and joy, and would draw no man from a right reading of them to the benefit of his soul; but only from giving their own judgments on them without the Spirit of God; lest, in so doing, they wrest them to their own destruction.

This is that which the Lord hath drawn us from, and which we know it would also be profitable to others to be drawn from too; to wit, from imagining and guessing at the meaning of scriptures, and interpreting them without the opening of that Spirit from which they were given forth; for they who so do, feed that part (with a gathered knowledge) which should be famished, die, and perish, that another thing might come to live in them, and they in it.

Now to us, being taught of God, and led by him into the things and through the conditions the scriptures speak of, the scriptures are very precious, the relation of things under the law precious, the instructions, promises, and comforts precious, yea, the very reproofs and denunciations of judgment to that part, nature and spirit which the judgments are to, precious; and it is impossible for any heart to conceive (who hath not the experience of the thing) how life springs in us; and how sweet, pleasant, and profitable the words of life in the writings of the holy men of God are to our spirits; and in reading them we often meet with refreshment, comfort, hope, and joy; from the working of the same Spirit in us, which gave forth the good words through them.

3. As touching ordinances, we own all the ordinances and appointments of God to the Jews under the law, and God's presence with them, walking with the Lord, and worshipping him in the faith according thereto.

thereto. Yea, what if I ſhould ſay, that we know and are exerciſed in the ſame worſhip in Spirit towards the Lord our God, who hath called and taught us to worſhip him in ſpirit and truth, ſo as he taught them, according to the ſhadow and letter? What if I ſhould ſay that we worſhip the Lord in ſpirit on the Lord's day (which is inward and ſpiritual, the true reſt, the ſubſtantial ſabbath) and that we offer up to him the living ſacrifices, which the High Prieſt of our profeſſion prepares in us for the moſt excellent majeſty and glory of our God therein? Were not the ſacrifices under the law, which they offered up according to the letter, types and ſhadows of what the Lord teacheth us, and giveth us to offer up to him in ſpirit, when we appear before him in his houſe built on his holy mountain? For, friends, the houſe wherein we appear is ſpiritual (an houſe of God's own building); the worſhip ſpiritual, the ſacrifices ſpiritual, the day of worſhip ſpiritual, even the day which the Lord hath made. And here we know and enjoy the things ſhadowed out under the law ſpiritually, eating that which is meat indeed, and drinking that which is drink indeed, even the fleſh and blood of the Son of man; in which we feel and partake of his nature, his virtue, his life, his ſubſtance, and both take it in into us, and put it upon us; ſo that we have Chriſt both to be our food and clothing; and in the birth, nature and Spirit which is of him, cannot be deceived concerning him.

But the great matter ye ſeem to have againſt us as to ordinances, is about the baptiſm of water, and breaking outward bread, and drinking outward wine; concerning which I have two or three weighty queries to propound to be ſeriouſly conſidered of.

Query 1. Were theſe things themſelves the things of the kingdom, or ſignifications of ſomewhat relating to the kingdom, as the ſhadows under the law were? And ſo, though they might have a uſe and ſervice in the paſſage from the law, yet could they have an abſolute place in the day? For as the day dawns and breaks,

breaks, the ſhadows fly away. What ſhould the ſhadow do, when that which the ſhadow ſignified is come? What place is there for ſhadows in the ſubſtance, in the everlaſting kingdom?

Now though the apoſtle condeſcended ſo as to circumciſe for the ſake of the Jews, yet circumciſion was not to abide. So he condeſcended alſo as to John's baptiſm; to wit, the baptiſm of water (for that was not Chriſt's baptiſm, but his baptiſm was that of the Holy Ghoſt and fire); yet he bleſſed God he did not make uſe of it, and ſaid, *he was not ſent to baptize.* What was he not ſent to baptize with? Why not with water, not with John's baptiſm; but he was ſent to baptize with Chriſt's baptiſm; to baptize into the name, into the Spirit, into the power, (and ſo were all the apoſtles) as well as to preach the goſpel, Gal. iii. 5. Mat. xxviii. 19.

Then for the outward ſupper: was not that a ſhadow of the true ſubſtantial ſupper of the Lord, of the breaking of the true bread, and drinking of the true wine (the fruit of the vine of life) in the kingdom of God? Which kingdom was at hand in John's time, and the diſciples of Chriſt were to pray it might come; and the apoſtles, and they afterwards (that were in the power, in the life, in the righteouſneſs, in the joy eternal) did witneſs it come. For mark: the promiſe was not only of a kingdom of glory hereafter, when the body is laid down; but they were to receive the kingdom, and feel an entrance (yea, an abundant entrance) into the everlaſting kingdom miniſtered to them even then: and they were to eat bread in the kingdom, and drink wine in the kingdom, even new bread, and new wine, freſh from the table of the Lord, yea, and with the Lord, in his preſence, according to the promiſe, *he would come and dwell in them, and walk in them, and ſup with them, and they with him.* And thus they in their day, and we in our day (bleſſed be the name of the Lord our God) eat and drink of the heavenly bread and wine of the kingdom with Chriſt therein; every one ſitting in the heavenly

heavenly place, and manſion of reſt, which the Lord hath built up and prepared for him.

Query 2. Have not theſe outward things been much abuſed, and the antichriſtian ſpirit (even the whoriſh ſpirit, which hath adulterated from the life and power of God) appeared in them, and cried them up? And ſurely, as ſo cried up by that ſpirit, they are neither of nor for Chriſt.

And conſider well what that outward court was which God gave to the Gentiles, and what the worſhip and ordinances of the outward court were; and whether they were not given to the Gentiles alſo, and whether theſe are any part of them; for if ſo, then they belong not to, nor are required by, the Lord, of the inward Jews, who are of the circumciſion in the heart, and are come to inherit the ſubſtance.

Query 3. Whether there be any virtue in theſe things in themſelves, without God's requiring of them? Can outward water waſh the ſoul? Can outward bread and wine feed or refreſh it? Indeed if God require a man to waſh his body with water, he ought to be ſubject, and there will be profit to him in his ſubjection; but of itſelf it is but a bodily exerciſe, and without God's requiring it, it would be but will-worſhip, and profit him nothing at all.

Now truly the Lord did never require this of us; but hath ſhewn us the water which our ſouls and bodies had need of to be waſhed with, and the bread and wine which they are to be fed and refreſhed with: and in following the Lord according as he hath led us, and required of us, we have found reconciliation, life, reſt, peace, and joy with our Father, and pure refreſhment from him.

Query 4. As touching duties: Theſe are the two great duties we are taught, *To love the Lord our God with all our heart, ſoul, and ſpirit; and our neighbour as ourſelves.* And theſe we learn by believing in him whom God hath ſent, and receiving the ſeed of life from him; in the growth whereof in us we live, and are made one with him, and partakers of the ability which

which is of him. For not by working of ourſelves do we attain to this; but by the working of his powerful life in us, through his mercy to us. He circumciſeth us, he cuts off the enmity, he brings under the old nature and ſpirit in us, and then the new ſprings up, and we are renewed in it. And in this we learn and are made able to love the Lord, and his children, and his creatures, yea, all that is of him. And this love conſtrains us to obey the Lord, and deny all for him; ſo that we can ſuffer any thing (through his ſtrength) but ſin, but corruption, but unbelief, but diſobedience to him. Yea, this makes us ſo tender towards him, that we can rather part with all of this world, than the integrity and ſubjection of our ſpirits to him in the leaſt thing that he requires of us; his truth (and our teſtimony thereto) in every reſpect being far dearer to us than our lives, and all the enjoyments and pleaſures of this preſent world.

From theſe two great duties flow many others as towards God; to fear him with the fear which is not taught by the precepts of men, but which he writes in our hearts; to wait upon him night and day in his temple, even in the holy place of his building; to call upon him in the motion, guidance, will, and help of his Spirit (for indeed when once we learn of God, we are taught to pray no more after the fleſh, no more after the will, wiſdom, or way of man); as alſo to be ſenſible of his goodneſs, and give thanks to him in every condition.

And in this we feel his preſence and acceptance, as the Lord is not forgotten by us; but when we eat and drink, walk abroad, or ſtay at home, we feel him near, and our hearts acknowledge him, bow to him, wait upon him, bleſs him, praiſe his name, and ſpeak words concerning him, or to him, with the outward voice, when he gives them, and requires them of us; but of a truth we dare bring no ſacrifices of our own, nor kindle any fire or ſparks of our own; but wait for the holy breath, Spirit, and power of our God, to perform all in us, and by us.

But

But now, becauſe we do not pray at certain ſet-times, (as we formerly were wont to do) nor ſpeak words before and after meat as formerly, and the like, ye are offended with us, and ſay we deny this duty. No, no; we do not deny to God the prayer which is from the birth immortal; but this we ſay, and ſenſibly feel, prayer is a gift, and the ability thereof is in God's Spirit; for we know not what to pray for as we ought, nor have we a power in us to pray when or as we will; but in the Holy Spirit, in his breathing in us, is our ability; and we are to wait on him for the moving and breathing of his Spirit, and not to pray of ourſelves, or in our own wills or times, but in the Father's. And it is a mighty thing to ſpeak to God aright in prayer. Fleſh muſt be ſilent before him, and laid ſtill and low in his preſence, that the pure ſpring may open, the pure breath breathe, and the pure voice iſſue forth; for God heareth not ſinners, but the born of him that doth his will. This muſt every ſoul witneſs in his meaſure, as Chriſt witneſſed it in the fulneſs; and there is no ſerving God aright, or performing any duty or ordinance of worſhip to him aright, but in a meaſure of the ſame life and Spirit wherewith Chriſt ſerved him.

Now I do not only own the ſtate of the Jews in their integrity, and of the primitive Chriſtians in theirs, and of what the Lord hath cauſed to break forth in this our day, but I alſo own all the appearances of God all along the night of the apoſtaſy in the holy martyrs and witneſſes, which he raiſed up, and enabled to bear teſtimony to his truth, and againſt the antichriſtian practices of many in that dark night of the apoſtaſy. And thus alſo I own all the work of God in my own heart, and in the hearts of others (whom he pleaſed to work upon) in former times; yea, the breathings and deſires which are yet in the hearts of any after the Lord, ſo far as they are in the truth, and of and from the Lord, I cannot but own. But the Lord hath ſhewn me that there is a great mixture in mens deſires and endeavours after him; and

that

that the evil ſpirit (by his ſubtilty) doth often get the managing of them, and turn the very zeal and earneſtneſs of the mind (through prejudices and miſapprehenſions) againſt the Lord and his truth. Now this is a very dangerous ſtate, and there are ſome (who little think ſo) in this ſtate, doing that againſt the Lord, and againſt his Chriſt, his truth, his people, which, if ever their eyes be opened, they will mourn bitterly over; and if their eyes be not opened, but they walk on by a wrong light, (even by a light of their own gathering, imagining, and conceiving) whither will it lead them, and what will their end be? Oh! that ye could hear! Oh! that ye could fear aright! Oh! that ye could rightly conſider! Oh! that ye could feel the life and power of the Lord near you, the Word of life near you, even as near as ye have felt the enemy and his temptations, that ye might partake of, and witneſs with joy, the virtue and redemption of it! Oh! that ye could once aright look upon him whom ye have pierced, and yet daily pierce, and cannot but pierce, until the righteous judgments of the Lord be poured out on the head of the tranſgreſſor in you, and the Lord waited upon, feared, and ſubjected to, in the way of his judgments, that ye may feel the refining work finiſhed, the droſs burned up, the temple prepared, the veſſel brought pure out of the furnace! What then? Why when the Lord hath built up Sion, prepared his temple, cleanſed his houſe, will he not appear there in his glory? Shall it not become an houſe of prayer, of pure prayer, and of pure praiſes? Shall there be any lame or blind ſacrifices offered up there? Shall it not be the beauty of holineſs indeed? Shall not the appearance of the Lord be more glorious there than ever it was in the temple and ordinances under the law? Shall not every living ſtone in this building feel the God of life and power preſent of a truth, and feel not only the earth, but the very heavens melt before him and paſs away, and nothing remain but the pure light and life of the Lamb?

Words

Words and promiſes ſpoken concerning things to be brought forth in the goſpel-ſtate do not go beyond the things ſpoken; but the things brought forth excel and go beyond the words, being ſo felt and enjoyed by that which is fitted and prepared by the Lord, as words cannot utter. The Lord God lead all that rightly deſire after him into the right way (and preſerve them therein) of meeting with and enjoying what their hearts rightly deſire, and beat back the enemy in all his devices of entangling, perplexing, and drawing them aſide; that they may receive the covenant, the new covenant, walk with God in the light thereof, live in the life thereof, obey through the power thereof; and may know what kind of meat and drink, what joy, delight, and pleaſure it is to the ſoul to do the will, in the principle, and by the power, of the new life. So the Lord God Almighty, the Creator, Guider, and Preſerver of his Iſrael, lead you out of the darkneſs, bring you through the wilderneſs, reveal the hope in you, and ſtay your minds thereon, and give you to feel the true travel and faithful walking with him in the footſteps of the flock, which he hath led and is leading his in, and unto ſome of whom (in the tender mercy which from on high hath viſited them) he hath given full reſt and ſatisfaction in his truth.

A BRIEF

A

BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF THE

Ground of CERTAINTY and SATISFACTION, which it hath pleaſed the LORD to eſtabliſh in my Heart concerning Religion, and the Things of His Kingdom.

I HAVE been afflicted from my childhood, mourning and ſeeking after the Lord, and feeling very much grief and pain of ſpirit, through my ſenſe of the want of him. I have not been contented with the way of religion I was educated in, but (through that of God which ſtirred in me) found great defects in it, and was drawn and led by his Spirit to travel through it, and ſeek further. That which I ſtill ſought after was the reſting-place, the life of my ſoul, and power and preſence of the Lord, that demonſtration of his Spirit (as touching truth and the way of God) which was witneſſed in the days of the apoſtles. Now, breathing after this, but not meeting with it, cauſed unutterable anguiſh, miſery, and diſtreſs in my heart, ſo that my condition could not be hid within mine own breaſt, but my ſorrow alſo brake forth in the ſight of others.

But at length the eternal bowels have pitied me, and have ſhewed me the place of the ſoul's reſt, and I have felt the eternal arm gathering me into, and giving me ſome poſſeſſion of, a meaſure thereof; ſo that my heart is ſatisfied about religion and the things of God's kingdom, being taught of God how to know

know the Pearl, and the way alſo how to come to inherit and enjoy it; and in that way I have had great experience of the love, mercy, wiſdom, goodneſs, power, and righteouſneſs of the Lord; and notwithſtanding all my ſoul's enemies, I ſtill feel his preſence, life, and power, to his praiſe, which doth the work in me, and which giveth me to hope in him, and wait upon him. And now in love and tenderneſs of bowels to others, it is in my heart to anſwer a queſtion or two about the ground of the aſſurance and ſatisfaction which God hath given my ſoul; it being in my heart not to grieve or trouble any, but only to be helpful in holding forth what the Lord hath demonſtrated to and written in my heart, as he ſhall draw, move, and enable my ſpirit thereunto; to whom my ſoul boweth, and giveth the praiſe of all that he hath done in me, and pleaſeth by his Spirit and power to work through me.

Queſt. 1. *It may be inquired by ſome, How I come to know the Spirit of God, and his church, and the ſcriptures of the holy men to be written by the inſpiration and leading of his Holy Spirit; and how I know the motions and drawings of his Spirit in me, from the motions, ſuggeſtions, and temptations of the evil ſpirit; and how I am ſatisfied that I am in the way of truth and life eternal, and do not wander out of it, and err from it?*

Anſ. Thus I know; By receiving, joining to, abiding and growing up in that holy ſeed, which the Father of ſpirits hath ſown in me. There is an elect ſeed which cannot poſſibly be deceived, which ſeed the Father ſoweth, and cauſeth to grow in the hearts of them that receive it; whoſe earth is by him digged and prepared for it. Now I have felt this ſeed from God, this holy pure thing, which there is nothing like for virtue and excellency. Nothing hath its nature beſides it, nothing manifeſts the Father but it; the heart is changed, renewed, reſtored into the holy image by this alone.

In this ſeed there is no deceit; no deceit ever came from it, no deceit ever entered into it, nor can; and

from the day that I have known it, I have always felt preſervation by it, while my heart hath been kept to it. Mine eye never miſ-ſaw in it, mine ear never miſ-heard in it, my heart never miſunderſtood in it; but here I have felt given to me, and maintained in me by God, the eye which ſees, the ear which hears, the heart which underſtands the things of his kingdom; and here the entrance hath been miniſtered into the everlaſting kingdom, where God reveals by his Spirit the myſteries of his kingdom, which all elſe are ſhut out of, but this ſeed and the birth which is of it. And when the enemy hath at any time in my travels, by any temptation or device, got in any degree between my ſoul and this ſeed; then a darkneſs, a loſs, doubts, fears, troubles, &c. have ſo far come over my ſoul.

Queſt. 2. *But how know I this ſeed, may ſome inquire?*

Anſ. By its nature, by its properties, by its manifeſting of itſelf in my heart. It hath that light, that life, that power in it, which I never met with any where elſe. It bruiſeth the head of the ſerpent at its pleaſure, whereby I know it to be the ſeed of the woman. It daſheth in pieces (through ſubjection to it) whatever is contrary to God, and bringeth up his holy nature in me. It ſo bringeth me into the very image of his Son, that what I read in the ſcriptures concerning the nature, righteouſneſs, and work of ſalvation by Chriſt, I find formed and ſpringing up in mine own heart, as I am gathered into, and brought forth in, this ſeed. Yea, I really feel that I am born of God's Spirit, ſo far as I am born of this. Here I feel, know, underſtand, and am acquainted with, the ſubſtance, the thing itſelf, that which all the types and figures of the law ſhadowed out. Here I meet with the circumciſion which is without outward hands; the baptiſm which is without outward water; the ſupper of the Lord, which is without outward bread or wine; and here I know the true Jew, whoſe nature, ſpirit, works, and ways, are all of God, in and through his

Son

Son Jeſus Chriſt. And here I muſt profeſs, I cannot doubt concerning the things of God; but in the light and anointing of this ſeed, ſee both the myſtery of iniquity, and the myſtery of godlineſs, and the ways and workings of each ſpirit, both inwardly and outwardly; and my unity with the one, (through the tender mercy, goodneſs, love, and power of the Lord, all which are herein revealed) and my ſeparation from the other.

And this is the true way of certainty and ſatisfaction, which is of God, and will ſtand, when all the ſeveral ways of mens inventions will fail of what they promiſe to men, and fall in the ſight of men. For this ſeed and birth of God are to be acknowledged, and reign in the day of his power, and not another. And it is the day of his power in ſome, and ſhall be the day of his power in others; for darkneſs or death ſhall not prevail to bring the life of the riſen Son into the ſepulchre or grave again; but he ſhall ride on conquering and to conquer, ſubduing and to ſubdue, reigning and to reign, until he hath brought all things under the dominion of the Father's power.

A QUESTION anſwered about the Way of knowing the Motions, Doctrines, and Teachings of CHRIST's Spirit.

Queſt. *HOW may a man know the motions, doctrines, and teachings of Chriſt's Spirit inwardly, from the deceivable movings, appearings, and workings of a contrary ſpirit? And how may a man know concerning the doctrines that others teach, whether they ſpeak from Chriſt, or whether they ſpeak of themſelves?*

Anſ. This is a great matter indeed, and he muſt firſt receive ſomewhat from God, who is able to do

this. He must be born of the wisdom that is from above, he must receive a spirit of discerning from God, he must receive somewhat of the sheep's ear, somewhat of the holy understanding, whereby he may be made able to distinguish spirituals, and put a difference between the pure and impure; between the pretender to the things of God, and him which is indeed of God. There is a balance of the sanctuary appointed to weigh spiritual things and appearances in; and by this balance alone are they truly and rightly discerned and distinguished; and this balance is in the sanctuary, in the holy heavenly place in Christ Jesus, where the true weight of spiritual things (or things that pretend to be truly spiritual and living, but are not) is given and discerned. But he that weighs without this, he that weighs by his own judgment and understanding, by his own comprehension and conceivings; he weighs by that which is uncertain, changeable, and fallible, and turns up and down according to the appearances of things to him, but judgeth not the righteous judgment, which is from the sense, and in the light, of truth.

Therefore, oh! that men were humble, tender, meek, and sensible of their inability to judge as of themselves, that they might see their need of this gift of God, and wait upon him for it; being in the mean time as the weaned child, not meddling with things too high for them, but keeping and abiding low in fear and subjection to that which the Lord hath already made manifest to them. For what man is there, to whom the Lord hath not already (in his tender mercy and goodness) made somewhat of himself manifest? Who is there, who by the light of the Spirit of God in his conscience, knoweth not some evil which he ought to leave undone, and some good which he ought to do? Now this is the way of God, and the work which man should be exercised in, to feel his mind gathered into that which teacheth this, that he might receive power from the Lord to cease to do the evil which he is thus warned by him of, and

to

to do the good which is thus required of him. For thus the Spirit of the Lord teacheth and requireth of men, even inwardly in their ſecret parts, ſecretly quickening and enlivening them in ſome meaſure, and giving them a ſenſe of their ſin, death, ſeparation from him, miſery and danger thereby; for where there is any ſight of ſin, and any ſenſe of the burden thereof, there is ſome life, ſome light, ſome little ſtirrings of the life, and ſome quickenings thereby, without which this ſenſe could not be. Now mark.

Are not here the drawings of the Father? Are not here the teachings of the Father, though but in a little meaſure; yet true, yet living? Is not here ſome little diſcerning given between the precious and the vile; between ſomewhat that is of God, and ſomewhat that is againſt him? Well then, here is the gift of diſcerning, though in a poor, low, little, weak meaſure; and that man who receiveth this, receiveth the beginnings of the gift, ſomewhat of the gift, whereby he may be able to diſcern and diſtinguiſh a little about ſpiritual things, ſo far as the light and ability of the gift in him extendeth.

Now this is man's work, (and in this lies his ſafety) to come hither, abide here, and grow here. Not to judge out of this; to judge no farther concerning the things of God, than this judgeth in him; to keep the judgment which he hath from this; not hearkening to the ſubtil devices of the enemy, which will ſtrive afterward to cloud his mind, delude and deceive him, with a falſe appearance of wiſe reaſonings and diſputings of his own, or from other men, to make him believe otherwiſe. And ſo keeping what ground he hath gained, he is to wait for more of this light, more of this life, more of this virtue, that his ſoul may grow up and increaſe therein, that his eye may be ſtrengthened to ſee further, and his ear to hear further, and his heart to embrace more of the inſtructions and directions of the Spirit of the Lord, unto and in the way of the kingdom.

Therefore the man that would meet with, and receive from God, the gift of diſcerning, let him mind the preſent manifeſtation of God's light from his Spirit in his heart; embrace that, fall in with that, take heed of the reaſonings of the mind againſt the convictions and demonſtrations of God's Spirit, but receive the truth in the love of it, even the loweſt appearance of truth, about the leaſt and moſt deſpiſable things, and give up faithfully to the Lord therein, without murmuring, without diſputing, without conſulting with fleſh and blood. And he that is faithful to the light of the Spirit (and to the diſcerning which is thereby) in the little, he ſhall receive more, he ſhall have his light and diſcerning thereby increaſed, as his need requireth. But he that ſtands diſputing, and would have all his way made clear to him, before he ſets one ſtep in it; he is far from becoming that child, which the Father teacheth, and adminiſtereth an entrance into the kingdom to.

This, in effect, was the very anſwer which Chriſt gave to this thing in the days of his fleſh, when there were great diſputes concerning his doctrine, how to know whether it was of God or no. What was the reſolution he gave of this; "If any man," ſaith he, "will do his will, he ſhall know of the doctrine "whether it be of God, or whether I ſpeak of my-"ſelf," John vii. 17. Wouldſt thou know of the Son's doctrine? Wouldſt thou know whether it be the doctrine of the Son indeed, the doctrine of him who comes from the Father? Yes, very fain, will the upright heart ſay; oh! that I might know concerning what riſes and opens in my heart, whether it be from the Spirit of God, or from the root of deceit in me! Why this is the way; do the Father's will.

Object. *Do the Father's will; why what an anſwer is this! The diſpute is about the Father's will. Is not the doctrine of the Son the Father's will? How can I do the Father's will, which the Son is to teach me, until I firſt know of the Son's doctrine?*

Anſ.

Anſ. It is true, the Son's doctrine is the Father's will, and thou canſt not do the Father's will, but as thou receiveſt the Son's doctrine. But mark; There are diſputes in thy mind about ſomewhat of the Son's doctrine, whether it be his doctrine or no; ſomewhat alſo about inward motions, workings, and ſtirrings in thee, which thou wouldſt fain know whence they are. Now the queſtion is concerning the way how thou mayeſt attain to this; how thou mayeſt come to a certain and ſatisfactory knowledge herein? Which is, not by entering into reaſonings and diſputes about theſe things whereof thou doubteſt, but by coming into that wherein and whereby they are made manifeſt; and that is by coming into obedience to the Father in that, which he hath already made manifeſt; for in that light (to them that believe in it) and in obedience thereto, (be it ever ſo little, or the manifeſtation ever ſo ſmall) the Father will reveal more, and give to that heart and mind to be ſenſible of what is of him, and what is of the enemy, ſo far as it is needful for it as yet to know. For wiſe and abſolute judgment in all things, is not neceſſary for a babe; but ſenſe to know the breaſt, and to receive from it the milk, by which it is to be fed that it may grow. This is enough in its preſent ſtate; yet if there be need of ſtrength at any time to ſtill the enemy and the avenger, the Lord will reveal it in the heart, and bring it forth out of the mouths of the babes and ſucklings, to the perfecting of his praiſe.

So mind and learn the way, O ye that are ſimple-hearted, (and truly deſire after the Lord, and the purity and power of his kingdom) and take heed of the wrong way; take heed of man's way, which is by conſulting with his own wiſdom, and weighing things in the balance of his own reaſon and underſtanding; and thus he may weigh ſcriptures written in former ages, and the appearances of God in this age, and err in heart, mind and judgment concerning them both, all his days. But he that waits on the Lord in fear, and in obedience to that which is already made manifeſt, not

desiring knowledge from God in his own will, time, or way, but in the Lord's, who perfectly knows every one's state, and what is fit for him; he shall know concerning every doctrine his heart desireth to be instructed in, in the Lord's season; and in the mean time the Lord will feed him with food convenient, and clothe him with clothing convenient; and there shall be no want to him, who boweth before the Lord in what is already made manifest, and waiteth for his further manifestations and appearances. But the wise hunter after knowledge, before the Lord leads, and further than he leads and teaches; this is the first birth, which is excluded the kingdom and the mysteries thereof: this is he who always despised and would still kill the heir, that the inheritance might be his; but the inheritance is appointed for, and given to, another; even to the Lamb's nature, the Lamb's Spirit, the Lamb's innocency, the birth of another wisdom, which is a foolish weak birth in his eye, and not worthy at all to inherit; but it is the Father's pleasure to give the kingdom and inheritance of life everlasting to these.

To speak yet a little more plainly, and bring it yet a little closer to the heart, if it may be. It hath pleased the Father, in this day of his love and power, to gather a little flock out of the world (and all worldly professions of worship and religion) to himself. This flock he hath gathered by a poor, little, low thing in their hearts, exercising them thereby in poor, mean, and contemptible ways to the eye of the world, and to all the professions of man's wisdom; and by this, and concerning this, he testifieth (through those whom he hath gathered) to others. And the testimony doth evidence itself (through the power of the Spirit) to all that wait upon God for an ear, and hear in the simplicity thereof.

Now when we tell men of a divine principle, of a seed of God, wherein their religion is to begin, and from which it is to grow, and whereof they are to be born; this will enter into many, yea, many will assent

to

to be drawn ſo far as to wait inwardly for, and upon this. But now when this begins to ſtir and move in them, it is in ſuch a way, and many times about ſuch low, mean, contemptible things in their eyes, that they are very apt to deſpiſe it, and enter into diſputes againſt it, and ſo miſs of the entrance, and can never thus enter into it; but inſtead thereof are filled with doubts about the leader and his motions, and puzzled and entangled in their minds, and ſtopt at the very beginning. And ſo, though they deſire much, and hope much, yet all comes to little, becauſe the enemy hath poſſeſſed their minds with a device of his ſubtilty, as if theſe were ſmall things, and of little concernment. That which they want is the powerful life, the clear light, &c. and ſo their minds are taken up with thoughts about theſe great things, and deſires after theſe great things, and they overlook the way wherein and whereby theſe are to be witneſſed and obtained.

For the Lord God, in his infinite wiſdom, picked out theſe contemptible things to exerciſe his flock by, and to lead them in. And whatever men may think of them, yet none knows (but they who experience it) how hard it is to follow and ſubject to the Lord in theſe, and how much they bow down and break the earthly and uncircumciſed ſpirit in a man. Now, friend, thou who deſireſt life from God, oh! take heed thou doſt not beat back the beginnings of his life, and the redemption of thy ſoul, by deſpiſing and overlooking the day of ſmall things. Why may not God chooſe to lead thee in the way that he hath led the reſt of his flock? Why ſhouldſt not thou alſo come to deny the cuſtoms and vanities of this world, (and come into that which is ſimple and plain) and ſtand in the will and life of God out of them? Are not the ways, cuſtoms, and vanities of the world, of the ſpirit of the world, and not of the Father? Did they not come from the corrupt part? Are they not of the corrupt part? Do they not pleaſe the corrupt part? Muſt they not be left behind by him that travels into

into the ſeed, is one with the ſeed, and lives in the ſeed? Why wilt thou ſtick in theſe things? Why wilt thou diſpute about theſe things? Oh! feel the Father's drawings, firſt out of the world, firſt out of that which is not of the Father, but of the world; that he may draw thee further and further, even into the kingdom and power everlaſting, which are many days journey beyond that which thou ſtickeſt at.

Now mind and remember this which followeth:

In the days of Chriſt and his apoſtles, God choſe the fooliſh things, and the weak things, and things that were not, to hide the path of life, and the myſteries of his kingdom, from the wiſe ſearching eye of man in thoſe days. Why may he not chooſe the like things now? Why may he not now reveal things to the babes, and not to the wiſe of this age and generation? Why may it not be to his glory, to have it now ſaid alſo, "Where is the wiſe? Where is the "ſcribe (where is the learned man)? Where is the "diſputer of this world?" Can any of them find out that, or any of them diſcern that, which God revealeth to his little ones? No, no: they are generally got too high above that little, low, tender, meek, ſenſible principle, in the faith whereof, and in obedience whereto, the teachings of God are received, and his life and power witneſſed. And becauſe of their riches, wiſdom, and knowledge out of this, therefore is the entrance into the pure living truth (which cleanſeth the mind, and keepeth it clean, which quickeneth it, and keepeth it living) to them ſo exceeding difficult.

And as the principle is little, the ſeed of the kingdom little, (like a grain of muſtard ſeed) the leaſt of all ſeeds; ſo, why may not its appearance alſo be little, even in low weak things, deſpiſable to man's eye and wiſdom; which man ſees nothing in, and may account of no value? And yet, the power of the croſs, (which brings down, and ſlays the corruptible) and the reſurrection of the life, may be witneſſed and felt

felt in them. "The fooliſhneſs of God is wiſer than "men, and the weakneſs of God is ſtronger than "men:" and he knoweth what he doth in leading his children in this contemptible path, and by theſe contemptible exerciſes, which all that is wiſe, high, lofty, and aſpiring, according to the fleſh, may eaſily overlook and ſlight, but can hardly ſtoop down and ſubject to.

God is the ſame that ever he was; and he ſtill appears in the way of his own wiſdom, and out of man's; and he that will partake of God's wiſdom muſt deny and keep out of his own. His touches, his drawings, his teachings, his bleſſings, his love, his peace, his joy, his ſweetneſs, &c. are let forth upon, felt, and enjoyed by the ſoul, in the new creation, in the new ſenſe, in the denial and paſſing out of the old.

SOMEWHAT

Touching the GOSPEL-REST, or SABBATH.

WHAT is the goſpel-reſt? What is the goſpel-ſabbath? Is it a ſhadow, as that of the law was? Or is it the ſubſtance of that which the law ſhadowed out?

"The law was given by Moſes." Moſes, by the command of God, gave forth the ſhadows of the heavenly things under the law; "But grace and truth "came by Jeſus Chriſt." The true ſabbath, the true reſt, the law of the Spirit of life, in and to the true Jews, comes by him. The law of Moſes had the ſhadow of the good things to come; which good things themſelves the goſpel contains, bringing life and immortality to light, and the ſoul into the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of the heavenly things themſelves.

The

The apoſtle diſputes the caſe about both theſe, Heb. iv. both about the ſeventh day of reſt, and about the land of reſt; ſhewing that they were neither of them the ſubſtance; they were but the reſts which were to paſs away. But beſides them, there was a reſt remaining, a day of reſt remaining, a land of reſt remaining; whereof they both (both the outward ſabbath of reſt, and the land of reſt under the law) were figures.

Now, for whom did this reſt remain? Why, it remained for the true Jews, for believers, for the ſpiritual circumciſion in the times of the goſpel. "And we "(ſaid he) who have believed, do enter into reſt." The faith gives entrance, the Son's faith; the faith which ſtands in the power, the faith which is victory, and gives victory over ſin and the world, removes the mountains and difficulties which ſtand in the way, and gives entrance into the goſpel-reſt. Faith, which is from and of the power of the endleſs life, puts ſin under, brings down ſelf, gathers man into a new principle, brings man forth in a new principle, cauſeth him to live and act in a new principle, &c. And as man comes thither, and that life riſeth and hath power in him, it cauſeth him to reſt from his own works, and to wait for and experience God, in and through Chriſt, to work all, and be all in him.

The apoſtle Peter alſo ſpeaks of this reſt, and declares how it is attained, even by ſuffering in the fleſh, "He that hath ſuffered (ſaith he) in the fleſh, "hath ceaſed from ſin," 1 Pet. iv. 1. It is the fleſhly part, the motions in the fleſh, from whence ſin ariſeth.

"Luſt, when it is conceived, bringeth forth ſin." Now Chriſt hath prepared and appointed a croſs, a ſpiritual yoke, to bring down the fleſh, which cauſeth great ſuffering in the fleſh to him that taketh it upon him. To deny all ungodlineſs, and every worldly luſt, motion, deſire, and delight of the fleſhly mind and nature, there is a ſore ſuffering to the earthly part; but yet this bringeth down the earthly part in all that take it up, and helpeth and cauſeth to ceaſe from ſin.

And

And he that hath taken up the croſs wholly, and felt the thorough work of it, and ſuffered in the fleſh the parting with and crucifying all that is of the fleſh, that which would cauſe him to ſin is ſlain in him, and he ceaſeth from ſin. Then he is in the reſt; then he keeps the reſt fully; then he knows the yoke and croſs, which was once burdenſome to him, to become eaſy and delightful, that being worn out in him to which it was painful.

Now he that is in meaſure delivered, that hath in meaſure ſuffered, findeth ſome reſt, and may in ſome meaſure keep the ſabbath; yea, in the faith, the weakeſt babe (abiding there) cannot but keep the ſabbath, and offer up the ſacrifices, and perform the ſervices thereof to the Lord. For the worſhip of the New Teſtament relates not to outward times or days; but is in the Spirit, in the truth, in the name, in the power, in the ſubſtance, on the day, and in the times and ſeaſons which the Lord hath made, and makes, in the ſpirits of his people.

And here that ſcripture is witneſſed to thoſe that are born of the Spirit, and live in the Spirit, and walk after the Spirit: "Sin ſhall not have dominion over "you; for ye are not under the law, but under grace." Who are not under the law, but under grace? Why they that are gathered by the grace, that hear the voice of God in the grace, drawing and enabling them to follow; they whom the grace overſhadows from the power and dominion of ſin; they are under it, they are ſheltered, ſaved, and preſerved by it.

He that is born of God ſinneth not, but obeyeth the grace; but he that committeth ſin, is the ſervant of ſin, and not yet made free by the grace and power of the Son from it. Yea, the Son gives that freedom in his day from ſin, and the power of Satan, as they that are out of the light of his day cannot ſo much as believe; but they that are gathered into, and walk in the light thereof, they witneſs the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, making them free from the law of

of sin and death. What! is the stronger than the strong-man come, with his law and power of the endless life, and shall not he manifest his dominion in the heart, over the law of sin and death? Yea, as it is received, and let in, it works out, overcomes, bears down, over-runs the law of sin and death; and that promise is witnessed, fulfilled, *O death! I will be thy death.*

And if God, by the power and breath of his Holy Spirit, with the living powerful laws thereof, kill sin and death in the heart, what shall make them alive again? No, no; then they are dead indeed, and the kingdom and reign of Christ is witnessed in that soul.

Then the birth of life is witnessed; then the man-child is witnessed, ruling with a rod of iron, dashing in pieces all motions and temptations to corruption, and all that would defile, so that they cannot enter the mind; and guarding it in the pure peace, unspeakable joy, and rest of the Son continually. And there it is as truly witnessed inwardly (as ever it was at any time enjoyed or hoped for by the Jews outwardly) that this horn of salvation, which God hath raised up in the house of his servant David, breaks all the horns of the oppressors, and gives rest to the soul from them round about, that, without fear of them any more, it may serve him in holiness and righteousness before him all the days of its life.

There are some good desires in many people, for which blessed be the name of the Lord; but there is great error of judgment, and wandering up and down from the truth, for want of that which is able to stay the mind upon the Lord, and to guide it in the right way. Some run to this mountain, and sacrifice there; others to that hill, and offer there; but few know the true resting-place, or the place of the true worship. Now in these their errors they can witness no acceptance with the Lord. Oh! that they knew the acceptable thing, the acceptable way of worship, and might appear

appear before, and be found of, the Lord therein! Then might they begin in that which is ſubſtantial, (in the goſpel Spirit, life, and power) and come to inherit and ſit down in that which is ſubſtantial and everlaſting.

SOME

QUERIES

TO SUCH

As complain of Want of Power to become the LORD's, and ſerve him; and who are not yet ſo acquainted with the Truth as to witneſs the Cleanſing by it, and ceaſing from Sin.

Query 1. WAS not Chriſt made a king and prieſt after the power of an endleſs life? And doth he not communicate of the power of that endleſs life to all that rightly believe in him, receive the truth as it is in him, and obey his goſpel?

Query 2. Was it not the end of Chriſt's coming to deſtroy ſin in the heart, and to ſet the ſoul free therefrom, that it might ſerve the Lord in the liberty, life, and power of his Spirit?

Query 3. To them that believe in and receive him, doth not Chriſt give power to become ſons to God? And to them that are ſons, doth not the Father give the Spirit of the Son? And hath not the Spirit of the Son power over the contrary ſpirit?

Query 4. Were not the deliverances of the Jews under the law real deliverances from their outward enemies?

enemies? And are not Chriſt's deliverances as real from the inward enemies? Whom the Son maketh free, are they not free indeed? Free from ſin, free from Satan, being under the ſhadow of the wing of the Almighty, which preſerveth out of the darkneſs, and guardeth the mind from the evil and danger thereof?

Query 5. Is not Chriſt ſtronger than the ſtrong man, whom he cometh to diſpoſſeſs? Are not his weapons ſtronger than the weapons of the enemy? Is not he able to diſpoſſeſs him, to caſt him out, to ſpoil him of his goods and ſtrength? And when he hath gained the houſe, is not he able to cleanſe it, and garniſh, and keep it clean and pure in the way of his covenant, againſt all the enemy can do?

Query 6. Doth not Chriſt dwell in the heart by faith? And is not Chriſt's nature and Spirit pure, and will he dwell in any thing that is impure? Is not the ſpiritual temple under the goſpel to be as pure inwardly, as ever the outward temple under the law was to be pure outwardly, or by way of repreſentation? Muſt not they be cleanſed from all filthineſs of fleſh and ſpirit, who witneſs the Father dwelling in them, and walking in them?

Query 7. Who offer up the incenſe and the pure offering in the times of the goſpel? Can any do it but the ſons of Levi, whom the Lord hath purified? Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Who can compaſs the altar of the Lord, or offer up an acceptable offering there, whoſe heart and hands are not waſhed in innocency?

Query 8. Is not the worſhip of the New Teſtament to be in ſpirit and truth? Is not the Spirit pure, the truth pure? Can any thing unclean enter into it? Can any be in it, can any worſhip in it, but they which be cleanſed, purified, and changed by it?

Query 9. How did the apoſtle expreſs the right manner of drawing nigh to God in the ſpiritual goſpel-worſhip? Was it not to be thus, with the heart cleanſed from an evil conſcience, and the body waſhed with

clean

clean water? And is not the preſence, power, and acceptance of God witneſſed by them that appear before him and worſhip him thus?

Query 10. Had not other lords dominion over the heart, to ſubdue it to ſin, and defile it, before Chriſt was known and received in his Spirit and power? But when Chriſt is known and received in his Spirit and power, have the other lords power to do ſo ſtill? Is not Chriſt's law, the law of his Spirit of life, able to bring under, and make the ſoul free from the law of ſin and death? Inſomuch as now it may be ſaid in truth, by the ſouls whom he hath ſet free, "O Lord, "our God! other lords beſides thee have had domi-"nion over us; but (now henceforward) by thee only "will we make mention of thy name."

Query 11. Was it not a brand of ignominy on thoſe who had got the good words and high notions about Chriſt, but were not in the authority and power of his Spirit, that they had eyes full of adultery, and could not ceaſe from ſin? Can any ceaſe from ſin, but he that receiveth the power? And he that receiveth the power of the new life, is it not natural to him to ceaſe from ſin, and unnatural to him to commit it?

Query 12. Is not the Lord the teacher of his people under the new covenant? Was it not promiſed of old concerning the goſpel times, and is it not fulfilled in the goſpel times, that "all thy children ſhall be "taught of the Lord?" And what doth the Lord teach? Doth he not teach to *ceaſe from doing evil, and to learn to do well?* And ſhall his children never learn this leſſon of him?

Query 13. Whoſe ſervants are they that obey unrighteouſneſs? Are they clothed with the ſtrength of God? Do they ſtand in the power of his might againſt the power of the enemy? Are they overcomers of the wicked-one? Or are they not rather daily overcome by him?

Query 14. What is the whole armour of God provided and appointed for? Is it not to keep out the enemy wholly? And is it able to do it, or no?

Query 15. Will not Chriſt ſay to all men upon the earth, profeſs they what they will, hope in Chriſt, and caſt themſelves upon him for ſalvation ever ſo much, and ever ſo often; yea, though they have received ſuch power from him as to preach in his name, and to caſt out devils in his name; yet if they have not ſo received the power as to overcome ſin in their own hearts, and to cauſe them to ceaſe from working iniquity, though they call him Lord, and cry to him with confidence, "Lord, Lord, open to us," yet will he not ſay to them, "Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity, I know ye not;" ye are not of the birth of my power; ye are not thoſe which have done my will; ye were never by me redeemed out of the evil-doing; but have ſtill all your days (notwithſtanding your profeſſion, notwithſtanding your knowledge, notwithſtanding your owning me as your Lord, and preaching in my name) been workers of iniquity?

Query 16. He that receiveth the ſpiritual circumciſion and baptiſm of Chriſt, doth it not cauſe him to ceaſe from ſin? And doth not the new life ſpring up in him, which cauſeth him to live holily to God? He that hath the offending eye plucked out, the offending hand cut off, is not that taken away from him which cauſed him to ſin? And he who is created a new creature in Chriſt, doth he not naturally do that which is holy and righteous? 1 John iii. 7, 8.

Query 17. Doth not the true faith, the faith of the Son of God, give victory over ſin? Can any believer be conquered by the enemy, he ſtanding in the faith, abiding in the covenant? Doth not the power ſtretched out by the Father of life defend the ſoul in the way of the covenant againſt all the aſſaults of the enemies, ſo that the gates of hell cannot prevail againſt any here, but the name of the Lord is felt a ſtrong tower againſt them; and though they encompaſs like bees, yet in the name of the Lord victory is witneſſed over them, and againſt all that they can do? And doth not the Lord teach and enable his to keep covenant?

Query

Query 18. Was not ſuch a thing witneſſed by Paul, (and may not ſuch a thing be witneſſed by the believing and obedient travellers now) "I can do all "things through Chriſt that ſtrengthens me. I know "how to want, I know how to abound; every where, "and in all things I am inſtructed," &c. I am armed with the whole armour of God, and taught to ſtand ſo upon my guard in the power of his life, that the enemy cannot come at me; but the power of the endleſs life ſo preſerveth me, as that the evil one cannot touch me, cannot enter me with any of his temptations in any condition?

Query 19. Was there not ſuch a condition once witneſſed, and may it not be witneſſed again, of being more than conquerors through the love and power of Chriſt? When the life doth ariſe in its power and dominion in the heart, doth it not ſoon ſcatter the enemies? Do they not fly away, and are chaſed at the blaſt of God's Spirit? When the ſoul is filled with the love and with the power, is not the land cleanſed of what annoyed it? And this, which is ſometimes felt by many of the travellers, may it not be an abiding ſtate? Are there not dwelling-places on Mount Sion, (on the mount of God's holineſs in the goſpel time) and is not there ſecurity from ſin, Satan, the ſoul's enemies, and dangers? "They ſhall not hurt nor "deſtroy in all my holy mountain, ſaith the Lord;" and will he not fulfil it to thoſe that wait upon him in the way of his covenant?

The CONCLUSION.

THERE is a principle of darkneſs in the hearts and minds of men, which is as a ſeed or root of corruption in them, bringing forth in them fruits of ſin and unrighteouſneſs unto death.

And there is alſo a principle of the pure heavenly light, as a free gift from God, to diſcover the darkneſs, turn man's heart againſt it, and lead him into the way and path of life.

Now as Satan rules in the principle of darkneſs, and there is the power of death therein; ſo God rules in the principle of light, and there is the power of life and redemption manifeſted by God therein.

For this principle is of the Father, of the Son, of the Spirit; yea, the Father, Son, and Spirit are in this principle; and here the ſoul meets with them, and is brought into union and fellowſhip with them, and feels the everlaſting arm revealed and ſtretched forth for its delivery from corruption, and the captivity thereof, into the liberty of the ſons of God.

And he that is here meets with the ſubſtance of things, and that which all the types of the law ſhadowed out; meets with the one offering, the cleanſing which is thereby, the imputation of righteouſneſs, or of faith unto righteouſneſs; yea, and with ſomewhat more, even with the everlaſting righteouſneſs itſelf brought into the heart, and dwelling there; inſomuch as his nature is changed, (truly changed) his ſpirit changed, his mind, heart, ſoul, and conſcience changed, his converſation changed, the leopard's ſpots and the Ethiopian's ſkin waſhed away, the deceitfulneſs of the heart removed, and the new garments of righteouſneſs, life, and ſalvation put on in the ſtead thereof; ſo that he is unclothed of the evil, unholy

unholy nature and ſpirit, and clothed with the Spirit of the Lord.

For Chriſt is really made unto him wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption. How is that? Why he that once was a fool, is now made wiſe unto God, and the things of his kingdom, by the myſtery of his Son's life and power revealed in him. He is a child of wiſdom, and he hath heard the wiſdom of his mother, and learned wiſdom of her. So putting on Chriſt, who is the righteouſneſs, being ingrafted into him, being brought forth in him, he partakes of the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of the olive-tree, and is renewed into the image of the true righteouſneſs and holineſs, and drinks in the virtue and life of the precious promiſes, wherein and whereby he is made partaker of the divine nature, and ſo cannot but witneſs redemption from the earthly corrupt nature.

Now it is not any ſtriving, believing, or obedience of man's own ſpirit, which can effect this; he may will ſtrongly, he may run hard, and yet never obtain; he may ſo caſt himſelf upon the mercy of God, and hope concerning his mercy in Chriſt, as to miſs of it.

But the principle of life which is from God, and faith in God from that principle, without fail effects this, and no other faith doth. But out of this are the myſterious images and idols, and ſubtil workings and devices of the cunning-one, to take up the mind with ſomewhat which appears as ſubſtantial and truly excellent, but is not ſo indeed. His birth hath deſires after the kingdom, (and makes no queſtion but it ſhall be his) wills, runs, ſtrives, believes, hopes, prays, reads ſcriptures, obſerves duties and ordinances; and in theſe they meet with a wrong knowledge, a wrong ſanctification, a wrong joy, a wrong confidence and aſſurance, a wrong reſt and peace; in which there may be a great warmth, and ſeeming life and pleaſure, from the fire and ſparks of their own kindling and blowing up, which the mind that is blinded by him can hardly ſuſpect that it is not true; yea, may be taken with it, and ſtrongly juſtify it in its own

thoughts for the true, and ſet it above that that is indeed the true. This, this is the great myſtery of iniquity, which hath great ſubtilty of deceivableneſs in it, to pick up and ſteal away the good ſeed out of the heart, and to ſteal in a falſe image and likeneſs thereof, which may have a more glorious appearance to man's eye than the true ſeed itſelf (for that is the leaſt of all ſeeds, makes the leaſt ſhew of any), but hath not the ſame nature, virtue, and power.

Ah! the Lord God of tender mercy help all the poor ſouls that breathe after him, that they may not be thus deceived. And thoſe that are thus deceived, and in the ſnare of the enemy (and do not witneſs the faith which hath the Son's dominion in it, and gives victory over ſin, Satan, and the world, and wherein the blood of ſprinkling, which livingly waſheth, is felt, in the light of life, wherein the redeemed walk to the praiſe of their Redeemer); the Lord guide them alſo to that wherein all deceits are made manifeſt, and where the truth, which is of the Son, is made to ſhine in ſuch who were once in the barren places, and in the thick darkneſs, but now are light in the Lord, and who have a dwelling-place with the Lord in his light, which is the pure and everlaſting habitation. Amen.

A POST-

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POSTSCRIPT,

CONTAINING

Some further QUERIES concerning the NEW COVENANT.

Query 1. WHAT is the new covenant? Is it not an agreement between God and the ſoul in Chriſt, according to the law of faith, as the old covenant was an agreement between God and the people of the Jews, according to the law of works?

Query 2. Who is the Mediator of this covenant? Is it not the Lord Jeſus Chriſt? Doth not he prepare the heart for the covenant, bring into the covenant, keep in the covenant, preſerve peace between God and the ſoul, and keep the ſoul in the way of truth and peace?

Query 3. Who is the Shepherd, King, and Prophet in this covenant? Is it any other than Chriſt the Mediator? Is not he the King and Prophet raiſed up to rule in righteouſneſs, and to inſtruct in the path of life? And is not his Spirit able to teach and inſtruct in all things, and able to govern and rule in righteouſneſs all that are ſubject to his breathings, quickenings, and holy movings, and inſtructions in their hearts, who writes his law there, and guides and governs by the law which he writes?

Query 4. How come men into this covenant or holy agreement with God? Is it not by repentance and faith? Is it not by turning from the darkneſs, which is

not of him, to the light. which is of him? Is it not by turning from the ſpirit of Satan to his Spirit; from the ſtandard and power of the wicked one, to the ſtandard and power of the Holy One? What is it that God lifts up againſt the darkneſs of the enemy, but the light of his Spirit, which diſcovers where a man has been, (and what he hath done) and gives him to repent thereof; and forſake all his dead works, and turn to the life and power which inſtructs and quickens him, in and by the Holy Spirit? And this is true converſion; and thus a man feels the covenant of ſin, death, and hell broken, and enters into a new covenant, a pure covenant, a living covenant, a powerful covenant, and comes to feel thoſe things which the covenant contains, as his condition requires, and as his capacity is made able to receive.

Query 5. How do men come to abide in this covenant? Is there any abiding but according to the entrance? Is there any ſtaying in the covenant, but in and by the faith that lets in? Doth not unbelief and diſobedience keep out from it at firſt? And doth not unbelief and diſobedience cut off from it afterwards? For there are ſins againſt this covenant, as well as againſt the old; and the ſins againſt this are more dangerous to the ſoul than the ſins againſt the old. "Take heed (ſaid the apoſtle) leſt there be in any "of you an heart of unbelief, to depart from the "living God." And ſaith Moſes, ſpeaking of the prophet, or angel of this covenant, "Beware of him, "and obey his voice; for he will not pardon your "tranſgreſſions, for my name is in him; and whoſo-"ever hearkeneth not to this prophet, he ſhall be cut "off." How can it be otherwiſe? For he ſpeaks life, and he ſpeaks it in the covenant to the circumciſed ear, to the ſoul in the faith, in the obedience. *Hear, and your ſouls ſhall live.* So then he that hears not muſt needs abide in death; and he that departs from hearing him, muſt needs return to death.

Query 6. Whether there be any purifying of the heart, or any juſtification, or keeping the veſſel clean, out

out of the obedience of the truth? "If a man keep "my ſayings (ſaith Chriſt) he ſhall never ſee death." "If ye (ſaith the apoſtle) through the Spirit, mor- "tify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live." But if the deeds of the body be not mortified by the Spirit, if a man do not keep the ſayings of Chriſt, doth he, or can he live then? Is not this then the main thing in religion, that a man receive the truth in the faith, and that he feel the power of the Spirit of life bring- ing him into, and keeping him in, the obedience thereof. For it is the truth that ſaves; the living truth, the living knowledge, the living faith; the law of the Spirit of life that makes free from the law of ſin and death; and it makes free by its powerful work- ing in the mind, working out, and preſerving from, that which defiles, captivates, and deſtroys. For Chriſt comes with his power to ſave, with his power to break the bonds of darkneſs, and to ſet the captive free: with his power to diſlodge and diſpoſſeſs all the enemies, and ſanctify the veſſel to himſelf; and the effects of his power in and upon the heart are his ſal- vation; and he that falleth ſhort of the miniſtration of the power of life to his ſoul, and of the effects thereof in his ſoul, is ſo far defective in point of ſal- vation: for no man is ſaved farther than he is redeemed and delivered from that which Chriſt comes to ſave him from.

Query 7. Whether the firſt thing of all to be wit- neſſed in religion is not the Spirit of Chriſt? Is not the whole work to be done by him? And how can a man be certain concerning any work wrought in him, unleſs he be certain that it is he that works? How can I be certain concerning the knowledge given me, unleſs I be ſure it be he that gives it? How can I be certain concerning any prayers or breathings ariſing in my heart, unleſs I be ſure they be from him? How can I underſtand any ſcripture concerning Chriſt, or the knowledge of any ſpiritual thing, unleſs I be ſure he open it to me? And how can I be ſure of any thing that he giveth or openeth to me, further than I know him,

him, and have the true ſenſe of him in his nature and operations? So then, if the Spirit be my leader, güide, teacher, inſtructor in the way of life, in the covenant of life, in the things of the kingdom, in the knowledge of ſcriptures, &c. it is of great concernment to me to receive that ear and heart from God, which knows and underſtands his voice; for, for want of this, are all the defects, miſtakes, miſcarriages, and errors, in and about religion. But as men come to this, they come out of error into certainty, and know the one Chriſt, the one faith, the one baptiſm, the one body, the one church, and aſſembly of the firſt-born, the pure love, which is of and in the truth, the pure path of the kingdom, the way of holineſs, which the ranſomed and redeemed walk in; yea, the Lord is One, and his name One among all that are here, and the pure One language, which is of the Spirit, wiſdom, and teaching, is here received, and the One voice of the Shepherd heard, &c. But out of this are the janglings, ſtrifes, contentions, debates, diſputes; ſubtil, wiſe, entangling reaſonings of the earthly, one with another, and all as one againſt the heavenly and ſpiritual.

Query 8. Did not the meſſage which Chriſt ſent his apoſtles to preach, "He that believeth and is bap-"tized ſhall be ſaved," contain the ſum of the covenant? What doth God require of the ſoul, but believing in his Son, (which includes repentance from the dead ſpirit and works) and receiving his baptiſm? To be baptized into him, into his death, into his life, into his nature, into his Spirit; to take up his croſs, to bear his yoke, to be circumciſed in him and by him, that he may love the Lord his God with all his heart, that the power, virtue, and life of love may conſtrain him to live wholly in and to God. And then doth not the promiſe of ſalvation to him that believeth and is baptized into Chriſt contain writing the law in the heart, putting the fear into the heart; putting the Spirit within to become the teacher, guide, ſtrength,

and

and comforter, and whatſoever elſe is neceſſary to the ſoul in the way to the kingdom?

Query 9. How is God merciful to mens iniquities, and remembers their ſins no more? Is it not in the covenant, and according to the covenant? Is there not a warfare to be accompliſhed before the ſoul come to witneſs the perfect blotting out of ſin? Is not Chriſt the Mediator, the Judge to whom all judgment is committed? And doth not he judge his people for their tranſgreſſions againſt the law of his Spirit and life? And muſt not the ſoul, who will witneſs the days of refreſhment, and the perfect blotting out of ſin therein, wait upon the Lord in the way of his judgments, even till ſin be judged and brought under, and God's righteouſneſs perfectly revealed? Under Moſes's law every tranſgreſſion received a juſt recompence of reward, and ſhall he eſcape in the goſpel who grieves the Spirit, who deſpiſes the Son, and gives ear to the enemy? Nay, nay; the ſame covenant that holds forth mercy to the tender broken-hearted, to the believing, to the obedient, contains alſo righteous judgment againſt the tranſgreſſor of this covenant. Yea, judgment begins at the houſe of God, and ceaſeth not till that ceaſe which judgment is to. The Lord ſhall judge his people; ſhall not Chriſt judge his own family? Yes, yes; they that are of the family, and in the true ſenſe, feel the Lord pleading with whatever is contrary to him in them, and they can rejoice therein, and ſing of mercy and judgment, after the Lord hath done his work in them, and brought forth the quiet fruit of righteouſneſs in their hearts thereby.

Bleſſed is he that experienceth theſe things, witneſſing that from the Lord which preſerveth out of all miſtakes and deceits about them.

AN

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ENQUIRY after TRUTH & RIGHTEOUSNESS,

A N D

After the People whom the LORD eſtabliſheth, and will eſtabliſh therein;

In ſome QUERIES on ISAIAH lviii. and alſo on Chap. liv.

Query 1. ARE there any people to be found who exceed the ſtate ſpoken of in ver. 2. of ſeeking God daily, and delighting to know his ways, as a nation that did righteouſneſs, and forſook not the ordinance of their God? They aſk of me, ſaid the Lord, the ordinances of juſtice; they take delight in approaching to God. Are there not many profeſſions and ſorts of profeſſors at this day, who in God's ſight fall ſhort of this ſtate, and yet think highly of themſelves? Yet theſe the prophet of the Lord was not to ſpare; but to lift up his voice like a trumpet againſt them, becauſe of their tranſgreſſion and ſin which they committed, notwithſtanding their thus daily ſeeking the Lord.

Query 2. What was the tranſgreſſion and the ſins which the prophet was not to ſpare them in, but lift up his voice like a trumpet againſt them for? Was it not (among other things) for their wrong faſting, their wrong afflicting their ſouls, their wrong ſeeking of God, out of the meek, tender, merciful ſpirit? Doth God require ſuch faſting or praying of any man? Or will the Lord accept ſuch faſting or praying at any man's hand? Ah! how many faſt and pray at this day, who never rightly conſidered, nor truly underſtood, what the faſtings, and what the prayers are which God requireth, and which alone he will accept!

Query

Query 3. What is the faſt which God requireth, and will accept in all ages? Is not this it, "To looſe "the bands of wickedneſs, to undo the heavy bur- "dens, to let the oppreſſed go free, to break every "yoke?" &c. ver. 6, 7. Who can underſtand or learn this faſt, but he that is taught of God?

Query 4. Are there any whoſe light breaks forth as the morning, and whoſe health ſprings forth ſpeedily, and whoſe righteouſneſs goeth before them, and whom the glory of the Lord gathereth up, or is a rereward to, (as is promiſed to thoſe who obſerve this faſt) and whom the Lord is ready to hear and anſwer in all that they call upon him for, as ver. 8, 9.? Doth not God teach his children in the new covenant to obſerve this faſt? And they who are taught by him to keep it, (and do faithfully keep it) do they not inherit this promiſe?

Query 5. Are there any now among the ſons of men, whoſe light hath riſen in obſcurity, and whoſe darkneſs hath become as noon-day? Whom the Lord guideth continually, and whoſe ſoul he ſatisfieth in droughts, and makes fat their bones; and makes them like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters fail not? Surely if there be any, who are truly taught of the Lord to obſerve that which leads hereto, they cannot miſs of enjoying theſe pre- cious promiſes: for he is faithful and true who hath promiſed, ver. 10, 11.

Query 6. Are there any at this day, whom God ho- noureth in building the old waſte places, in raiſing up the foundations of many generations; in repairing the breach, and reſtoring the paths to dwell in? What are the paths that are to be dwelt in? Are they not the ſame which the ſoul is to walk in? Is not the juſt man's path and his dwelling-place all one, even the light of the living, which he is both to walk and abide in? See 1 John i. 7. and Prov. iv. 18.

It is ſaid concerning Chriſt, "He that ſaith he "abideth in him, ought himſelf alſo ſo to walk, even "as he walked," 1 John ii. 6. How did Chriſt walk?

Did

Did he not walk in the light of God's Spirit? In ſubjection to God's Spirit? Was not the fulneſs given him? Was not the Father always with him? And did not he act in the Father, and the Father in and through him? Now, doth not he give forth a meaſure of the ſame Spirit, of the ſame anointing, of the ſame power to become ſons, unto all his? And are not they to walk according to the meaſure of light and life they receive from him? And he that walks according to this rule, can he err in ſo walking? Is not this the pure path, the living path, the path for the ranſomed in the days of the goſpel, who walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit; not in the oldneſs of the letter, but in the newneſs of the Spirit? Oh! that men could conſider this with the true underſtanding, and know the way of life in the true ſenſe and experience thereof! That which enlightens and gives life to my ſoul, is ſomewhat from Chriſt, even a meaſure or appearance of his pure Spirit; it is no leſs: and the law of life written inwardly is more to the ſoul than words written outwardly, though all the words that ever come from God's Holy Spirit are very precious, and greatly uſeful, to thoſe to whom he vouchſafeth to give the underſtanding of them.

Query 7. What is the ſabbath ſpoken of, ver. 13.? Is it the law-ſabbath, or the goſpel-ſabbath? Is it inferior in nature to the faſt before mentioned? What is God's holy day, which is the ſoul's delight, the holy of the Lord, honourable, wherein the ſouls that enter into the true reſt (by faith in him who is life) honour the Lord, in ceaſing from their own ways, pleaſures, and words? See alſo Heb. iv. 3. and 10.

Query 8. They that keep God's holy ſabbath, do they not delight themſelves in the Lord? Do they not feel the pleaſure of his day, and of his appearance in his day? Are not theſe of the true ſeed of Jacob (who prevail with the Lord for the bleſſing)? And doth not the Lord feed them with the heritage of Jacob their Father, even with the bleſſing of the covenant of life and peace for evermore.

SOME

SOME QUERIES ON ISAIAH LIV.

Query 1. IS there ſuch a ſtate to be witneſſed, either in the particular, or in the general, wherein the womb that was barren ſhall travail and bear, and ſing for joy of heart and ſpirit before the Lord? See ver. 1.

Query 2. Is there ſuch a ſtate to be witneſſed, as of the Maker to become the huſband? Is not this a glorious ſtate indeed, and a name better than of ſons and daughters, ſignifying nearer intimacy and union than any other relation with the Holy One, the Redeemer of Iſrael? And do not ſuch as come to this ſtate (even to be married to the Lamb) partake more abundantly of his redeeming power and holy preſence? See ver. 6.

Query 3. Are there ſome ſo viſited and redeemed by the Lord, as that they ſhall never be caſt off more, as that the floods of wrath ſhall never overtake them more, nor the covenant of their peace be removed? Ah! precious ſtate! Bleſſed are they doubtleſs, who have been ſo viſited and redeemed by God's mercy, as to be made partakers of it.

Query

Query 4. Who is this that hath been afflicted, toſſed with tempeſt, and not comforted? Have there been any ſuch in our days, who have been deeply afflicted, for want of the preſence of the Lord God of their life, who have been toſſed up and down with tempeſt after tempeſt, and could meet with no comforter to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon to their weary ſouls? And hath the Lord appeared to theſe, viſited theſe, built upon theſe, comforted theſe? Surely then, the poor whom he hath raiſed out of the duſt, and the needy whom he hath lifted off from the dunghill, cannot but praiſe his name.

Query 5. Who is this, whoſe ſtones God lays with fair colours, and her foundation with ſapphires? Whoſe windows God makes of agates, and her gates of carbuncles, and all her borders of pleaſant ſtones? Was not the covenant of life ſo adorned in the apoſtles days? And is ſhe not ſo adorned now again?

Query 6. Whoſe children are they, who ſhall be all taught of the Lord, and whoſe peace ſhall be great, who ſhall be eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs, who ſhall be far from oppreſſion, ſo that they ſhall not fear; and from terror, ſo that it ſhall not come near them? Are there ſuch a generation of the heavenly birth, of the covenant of life, brought forth in this our day, who ſanctify the Lord of hoſts himſelf, and make him their fear and their dread, but are not terrified with the wicked one, nor with the ſnares and engines of the ungodly? Surely they who are taught of God, have peace from him and in him, and are eſtabliſhed in the righteous Spirit and life of his Son; they are like Mount Sion, which cannot be ſhaken or removed, by all the terrors and oppreſſing devices of the ungodly.

Query 7. By whom do they gather together, who gather together againſt ſuch a people? Certainly it is not by the Lord, nor by any advice or counſel from him; but by the advice of that ſpirit which oppoſeth himſelf againſt the power and work of the Lord: and that

that ſpirit muſt fall for the ſakes of thoſe whom God hath raiſed up by his power, and undertaketh to defend. How tender was God of Iſrael after the fleſh in the day of his delivering them! See 1 Chron. xvi. 19, &c. And will he not be as tender of his ſpiritual Iſrael, in the day of his redeeming and delivering them? Indeed the oppoſition will be very great, but conſider who ſhall have the victory, ſee Rev. xvii. 14. Certainly it is true, and ſealed by the Spirit of the Lord, that patience, meekneſs, innocency, love, righteouſneſs, &c. ſhall at length overcome all unrighteouſneſs, enmity, oppreſſion, cruelty, wrath, &c. and that ſpirit from which they proceed; and as they are overcome, and when they are overcome, the Lamb's Spirit ſhall reign and ſhine in the glory of the Father. Oh! the ſweet ſenſe of this day, and further hope thereof; how doth it bear up the ſuffering lambs, in the midſt of all their trials and tribulations!

Query 8. Hath not God created the waſter to deſtroy? And hath not he power over him? And doth not he limit him in the midſt of his deſtroying work? But did God create him to deſtroy his heritage? Or will God ſuffer him ſo to do? They may indeed deſtroy the buildings which are not of God; but God is the wiſe, great Maſter-builder, who counted his coſt before he began, and knew he was able to maintain his building, againſt all the oppoſitions and oppoſers, which could riſe up againſt it.

Query 9. Can any weapon formed againſt the covenant of life, and the children thereof, who are taught of God, and have peace from him, and who are eſtabliſhed by him in righteouſneſs; I ſay, can any weapon formed againſt theſe proſper? Every tongue that riſeth up in judgment againſt them, doth not the holy tongue condemn? Is not this the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, in this our day? And doth not the Lord ſay (whatever men ſay to the contrary) that their righteouſneſs is of him? Indeed, whoever receiveth the true righteouſneſs, receiveth it from the hand of the Lord, and knoweth it to be of him.

And this teſtimony we have, even from the Spirit of the Lord, who taketh away our unrighteouſneſs and filthy garments, and giveth us righteouſneſs from and in his Son's righteouſneſs, even the very ſame wherewith the Son himſelf was clothed. For as the ſeed is but one, and of one, Heb. ii. 11. ſo the righteouſneſs is but one neither. Be not haſty in ſpirit, but wait to underſtand in the light and Spirit of the Lord, which is wiſdom's place of giving true underſtanding to her diſciples.

It is true, there hath been great darkneſs, and the true church hath been in the wilderneſs, and the remnant of her ſeed hunted and perſecuted up and down the earth by the falſe church, which hath been cried up for the true. But, bleſſed be the Lord, the darkneſs is paſſing away, and the true light ſhining again; which light diſcovers and redeems out of all that is falſe, into that which is true; ſo that he that is truth, and no lie, is again known, and he ſpeaketh truth and no lie, and he anointeth with the true and holy oil of life and ſalvation, all that are truly living. And now the kingdom of darkneſs is going down, and the kingdom of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt raiſing up and exalting; which is an inward kingdom, a ſpiritual kingdom, a kingdom of life, a kingdom of peace, a kingdom of righteouſneſs, a kingdom of holy power and dominion over ſin and death in the heart. And this will ſpread and increaſe, to the bleſſing of perſons, families, and nations, (as they come to be ſenſible of, and ſubject to the holy light and power thereof) with the bleſſings of Abraham, wherewith all families and nations are to be bleſſed, as they come to be unleavened from the ſerpentine ſpirit and wiſdom, and leavened with the innocency and righteouſneſs of the Lamb's nature and Spirit.

The mighty God carry on his work, by the ſame mighty arm of ſtrength wherewith he began it; and open the eyes of this nation, that they may ſee their proper hope and intereſt; for indeed the Lord hath great love to this nation, and bleſſing in ſtore for it

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(for the ſeed's ſake which he hath ſown and cauſed to ſpring up in it); though many trials and tribulations muſt firſt be paſſed through, and the ſpirit of enmity and oppoſition againſt the appearance of God's Holy Spirit and power worn out. Oh! that men could come to that which gives the eye-ſight, that thereby they might ſee aright, and no longer take the riſe of their ſeeing from that ſpirit and wiſdom, which miſrepreſents things.

Written in Reading-gaol, in the tender love, true innocency, and uprightneſs of my heart; which the Lord hath given me to ſuffer with for his truth's ſake; about the latter end of the 4th month, 1671.

ISAAC PENINGTON.

THE HOLY TRUTH and PEOPLE DEFENDED:

AND SOME OF THE

WEAPONS and STRENGTH

OF THE

POWER of DARKNESS, Broken and Scattered

BY THE

LIGHT and POWER of TRUTH,

IN AN

ANSWER

TO THE

Chief Paſſages in a LETTER, written to me, and replied to by me, before my Impriſonment in this Place.

Where I have been a Priſoner above a Year and a Half, without any Law broken, or Cauſe given on my Part; who only came Innocently and Peaceably to Viſit my Friends in Priſon.

By me ISAAC PENINGTON,

Priſoner for the TESTIMONY OF TRUTH, (for could I have denied TRUTH, I might have avoided the SNARE) at Reading-Gaol.

The Bows of the Mighty are broken; and they that ſtumbled, are girt with Strength, 1 SAM. ii. 4.

THE PREFACE.

A LETTER was ſent me from a dear friend of mine, (bearing date the fifth of the eleventh month, 1671) who had long been greatly diſtreſſed, and could not find relief in the way of her former profeſſion and church-fellowſhip; for whom I greatly travailed with the Lord, and towards whom my ſpirit was made very tender by him. I ſtill felt the ſeal of God's love and mercy towards her, even in her loweſt condition, deepeſt deſpair, and foreſt captivity, through her great and manifold temptations; and my teſtimony to her at times, from the Lord, on this behalf, was ſometimes of uſe to her, to bear up her ſpirit, till the day of God's viſiting and redeeming her, with the virtue and healing power of his ſalvation; which, bleſſed be his name, ſhe hath ſince had ſweet experience of, and true peace and joy in knowing the true Head, holding him in the faith, and being held by him.

Now, this letter of an ancient acquaintance of mine, which I had anſwered long ago, one that belonged to Sir Henry Vane (as ſhe ſignified in her letter to me) deſired ſhe ſhould ſee; which is ſaid to be an anſwer to a letter of mine. If my anſwer had gone along with it, I ſhould have took no further notice of it; but it going without my anſwer, leſt it ſhould do hurt to thoſe to whom the Lord hath done or is doing good, I am engaged in ſpirit to reply ſomewhat to it, and to give forth to others what the Lord giveth in to me, upon this new occaſion. How greatly, truly, and purely I have loved the man, I will not boaſt (the

Lord knoweth, with whoſe knowledge herein I am content): but, oh! that this his paper might not be laid to his charge at the great day! which (I am afraid) it will, unleſs he repent of it; for, indeed, it is not a fruit of life from God's Holy Spirit; but of the growth of Egypt and Babylon.

It was ſent me in the form of a book, as if it had been ſent abroad for ſpecial ſervice. There was no name at it, as if it were an arrow to fly in the dark, and wound ſecretly: but no weapon formed againſt the Iſrael of God ſhall proſper, either from this hand, or any other; and every tongue that riſeth up againſt them to judgment will God condemn. This is the heritage of the deſpiſed people and ſervants of the living God in this our day; whoſe righteouſneſs is the righteouſneſs of his Son beſtowed upon them, wherewith he himſelf hath clothed them, as the anointed eye now ſeeth, and all eyes ſhall one day ſee, and tongues confeſs, to the glory of God the Father.

THE

THE HOLY TRUTH and PEOPLE DEFENDED.

HE excepteth againſt thoſe words of mine to him in a former letter, (of Jan. 24. which I have not here by me) That when his eyes are opened by the Lord, he ſhall then acknowledge that we oppoſe no truths of the Lord, but hold forth what we have received from him.

To which he thus replieth, *Is redemption by Chriſt's blood no truth of the Lord's?* Which he chargeth one of us in particular, and many others in general, with denying.

Anſ. We are gathered into that, and abide in that, in which no truth can be denied; and are in him that leadeth into all truth, and teacheth to deny no truth, that ever was held forth by the Spirit of the Lord. Some of us may not yet be grown up in underſtanding into the myſteries of the kingdom, which God hath revealed and made manifeſt to others; but yet we do not deny, but own one another in our ſeveral meaſures of knowledge and ſenſe of things, and in our ſeveral growths. And we own and acknowledge, in God's ſight, the ſeveral diſpenſations he hath brought forth, both before the law, and under the law and prophets, and in the time of Chriſt's appearance in the fleſh; and after, when he ſent his Spirit, and all the time the church was in the wilderneſs, and now ſhe is coming forth again, in the brightneſs and glory of the Father, look-

looking fair as the morning, clear as the ſun, terrible as an army with banners. Nor do we diſown any thing that is of God in the profeſſors of this age; but only that which we know, and are required by him to teſtify againſt, as being not of him. Oh! that they could weigh our words and teſtimony in a right ſpirit! for they would not then be ſo offended at, and ſpeak ſo againſt us, as now they do. And the Lord knoweth we would do any thing that lieth in us to remove the ſtumbling-blocks that lie before them; but it cannot be done to that ſpirit in them, before which God Almighty hath laid the ſtumbling-block, that it might ſtumble, and fall, and be ſnared, and broken, and taken. But if they could come into another Spirit, and feel unity with, and the birth of, another Spirit, the birth of that pure wiſdom ſhould find no ſtumbling-block or offence in this precious diſpenſation of truth, wherewith God from on high hath viſited us.

And as for denying *redemption by the blood of Chriſt*, oh! how will he anſwer this charge to God, when none upon the earth (as the Lord God knoweth) are ſo taught, and do ſo rightly and fully own redemption by the blood of Chriſt, as the Lord hath taught us to do! for we own the blood of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, both outwardly and inwardly; both as it was ſhed on the croſs, and as it is ſprinkled in our conſciences; and know the cleanſing virtue thereof in the everlaſting covenant, and in the light which is eternal; out of which light men have but a notion thereof, but do not truly know nor own it. And let him conſider, before the time of antichriſt, it was a great matter to know and own Chriſt outwardly, as he appeared in that body; but ſince the antichriſtian ſpirit hath got that, the diſtinguiſhing knowledge and owning of Chriſt is, to know and own him inwardly. The outward knowledge and confeſſion now (as it is generally ſeparated from, and held forth in way of diſtinction from the inward) is but the knowledge and confeſſion of Babylon, and not the true living knowledge and confeſſion of Chriſt, in and by the Spirit of the Father,

Father, which is the knowledge and confeſſion of all the children of the true and heavenly mother, which is the mother of all that are born of the Spirit.

He repeateth thoſe words of mine, *That we do not make any finite thing our righteouſneſs; but Chriſt of God is made unto us righteouſneſs. This*, he ſaith, *is well ſpoken, and wiſheth we may always abide in this confeſſion.*

Anſ. Theſe words aroſe in me from an inward feeling of him who giveth righteouſneſs, and of the righteouſneſs given; and the Lord preſerving me in that life, I ſhall feel ſo for ever, and confeſs ſo for ever. And truly I can teſtify of no other righteouſneſs; for, bleſſed be the name of my God, I feel the righteouſneſs of his Son revealed in me daily, from faith to faith. In his name I have been gathered, in his name I live, and in him I feel righteouſneſs; and indeed there is nothing but righteouſneſs, holineſs, truth, life, and ſalvation (and the like) in him.

And he that is truly in him, is righteous and holy in him; there being in him a new creating of all that are there, and a renewing into the holy and heavenly image, which conſiſts in the righteouſneſs and holineſs of truth.

He deſireth me to give a plain anſwer to this queſtion:

Is Chriſt of God made our righteouſneſs by faith in his blood, or in his Spirit?

Anſ. A pretended faith in Chriſt's blood, without faith in his Spirit, is but dead and notional. "Except ye eat my fleſh, and drink my blood (ſaith Chriſt) ye have no life in you. It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the fleſh (ſaith he) profiteth nothing." Now the faith muſt be in that which quickeneth, and the faith in that which quickeneth is holy and righteous, and the man who is found in it is juſtified, through that faith in the quickening power, in the ſight of God. Thus Abraham was juſtified in the ſight of God; and thus are the children of Abraham to be juſtified, even through believing in that holy power and Spirit which requireth obedience, and juſtifieth

fieth the obedient, and condemneth the disobedient for ever, Rom. iv. 24.

He saith, *He fears a snake in this green grass, when I say, From his life, virtue, and power revealed in us, is our conformity to him.*

Ans. It were better and safer for him to fear at home; for the snake is in his own grass, and many notional, high, soaring expressions, without true knowledge. But can there be any conformity to Christ without his life, virtue, and power inwardly revealed? What else can conform unto, and bring forth in, the image and likeness of Christ?

He saith, *He feareth lest I make this life and virtue our righteousness, which is indeed the fruits of it.*

Ans. Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge, and runneth out from the truth into his own imaginations? What was Christ's righteousness? Was it not the life, the virtue, the Spirit of the Father in him, he being one with it, in the faith of it, and in the obedience to it? And is not the righteousness of the head and the body the same, communicated from the head to the body? Are they not all of one, and the righteousness one and the same in both? So much of Christ's Spirit, so much of his righteousness; and out of his Spirit, out of his righteousness for evermore. For the righteousness of the Son is revealed, and communicated from faith to faith, in his Spirit; and so Christ is indeed made righteousness to them that are found in his Spirit; and they are covered with the garment of righteousness and salvation, who are covered with his Spirit.

He saith, *Our righteousness is before this.*

Ans. What! Is our righteousness before any of the life, virtue, and power of Christ revealed in us? Is God a respecter of persons? Doth he justify any out of the holy covenant before he hath made a change in him? How doth this man, with his vain imaginations, turn the whole way and counsel of God upside-down?

He

He brings a ſcripture to prove this, *The ſpirit is life for righteouſneſs ſake.*

Anſ. That ſcripture (which is Rom. viii. 10.) ſpeaks of thoſe in whom Chriſt is and dwells; and there indeed "the body is dead becauſe of ſin, and the ſpirit "is life becauſe of righteouſneſs." This is plainly ſpoken, and plainly felt and known as it is ſpoken. Oh! that he had the true ſenſe and underſtanding of it as it is in Jeſus!

He ſaith, *Righteouſneſs is in order of nature before ſanctification.*

Anſ. That which is holy is righteous; there is nothing righteous in the eyes of the pure God but that which is holy. The head was really holy and righteous, and they that are in him partake of his holineſs and righteouſneſs, and are really holy and righteous in him; and faith, which purifies the heart, and through which ſanctification is, muſt needs be in order of nature before the juſtification which is by it; for God juſtifieth no unbelievers, but believers only. Yea, the wicked muſt forſake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and turn unto the Lord; which cannot poſſibly be without ſome degree of ſanctification, before the Lord will have mercy, and pardon the ſoul its ſins, Iſa. lv. 7. and chap. i. 16, 17, 18.

He ſaith, *Juſtification is an act of grace paſſed upon us by God freely, without reſpect to us as godly; nay, properly reflecting on us in that moment as ungodly.*

Anſ. I charge this in the ſight of God for abſolutely falſe doctrine, and contrary to the goſpel. For God juſtifieth no man as ungodly; but calleth upon men to repent, and turn from their ungodlineſs, and he will have mercy upon them, juſtify and ſave them. Now men are not ungodly in turning from their ungodlineſs, but changed; and ſo their ſtate is in ſome meaſure changed before juſtified. If Abraham was ungodly when God called him; yet in forſaking his own country, and following the Lord, and offering up his ſon, he was obedient, and not ungodly, and in

that

that obedience he was juſtified. A man may have notions of juſtification in his mind, and accordingly take himſelf to be juſtified, when he is not; but there is no man juſtified by the Lord till he be changed, tranſlated into him in whom God juſtifieth, out of the place of condemnation into the place of juſtification. For till men are changed by the Spirit and power of the Lord, they are but darkneſs, and in the darkneſs, where no juſtification is. It is the believing, the obedient, the children of light, that are juſtified by the Lord.

He ſaith, *Were we godly before or at that time, it were no act of grace to pronounce us righteous.*

Anſ. He that witneſſeth ſalvation in Chriſt Jeſus, witneſſeth it to be a continued act of grace. Grace appears to the ſoul, grace teacheth, grace enableth, grace maketh a change from the ungraciouſneſs of the heart and ſtate; and then grace (or God by his grace in and through Jeſus Chriſt) forgiveth the ſins that were committed before. For though the Lord viſit me with life, quicken me thereby, make a change in my heart and ſtate; yet it is his mercy to accept me, and to paſs by for his name's ſake my former debts and treſpaſſes againſt him. Alas! the new covenant is wholly a covenant of grace and mercy; and the giving of Chriſt, drawing the mind to him, accepting and juſtifying in him, are works of grace and mercy towards his. So the ſpiritual Iſrael may well ſing this ſong in the land of holineſs and redemption, "O "praiſe the Lord! for he is good, and his mercy en-"dureth for ever." I can truly ſet my ſeal to this thing; that the more holy and righteous the Lord maketh me in his Son, the more ſenſible am I of his love, grace, and mercy, in juſtifying of me; and it is precious to me to witneſs juſtification and acceptance with him in and through his Son.

He ſaith further, *But this is the bounty, the freeneſs, the munificence, the riches of the grace of God, to call things that are not as though they were.*

Anſ.

Anſ. Take heed of abuſing that ſcripture. God ſent Chriſt to renew, to redeem, to change, to make holy and righteous, to make people ſuch as the Father might be pleaſed with, accept, and juſtify; and as Chriſt maketh them ſo, the Father receiveth and accepteth them as ſuch. But God doth diſtinguiſh and call things as they are. He doth not call an ungodly man an holy man, a juſtified man; but when he hath changed him, new created him in Chriſt Jeſus, took him out of his old ſtock, and planted him into the new; then he accounteth and calleth him ſo, and not before. It were better for men to wait upon God to underſtand what his Spirit meant in what he ſpake, than to put formed meanings of their own upon his words.

He wreſts my words, charging and reproving me, as if I ſaid, *The love of God was a bare thing.*

Anſ. Thoſe were not my words, nor did my words ſo ſignify; but my words were, That it is not by bare loving (or mere loving, or only loving) that God makes a man righteous; which is very true and manifeſt: for there is, beſides his love (in and through that love) the ſending of his Son, and revealing of his Son, drawing to and tranſplanting into his Son, to make holy and righteous in him. For holineſs, though it may be diſtinguiſhed, yet it cannot be divided from righteouſneſs; nor can a man poſſibly be righteous in God's ſight, unleſs he be alſo holy in ſome meaſure. His reflecting words hereupon I paſs by, though very unjuſtly and unchriſtianly caſt upon me, (without any juſt occaſion given him by words) which I deſire the Lord may make him ſenſible of, that he may be forgiven it.

He blameth me for ſaying, We make no finite thing our righteouſneſs, and yet he ſaith, *We make the meaſure of the Spirit (which each member of Chriſt receives) our righteouſneſs.*

Anſ. A meaſure hath the ſame nature with the fulneſs. A meaſure of the Spirit and life, of the grace and truth which comes from Jeſus Chriſt, hath the ſame

ſame nature that the fulneſs hath. All the life, all the new creation that comes from him, and dwells in him, is righteous, and found righteous wherever it is found. Yet I do not remember that we have thus expreſſed it, that that meaſure is our righteouſneſs; but it is he who is the fulneſs, who is revealed in that meaſure; and it is he who is our righteouſneſs, our wiſdom, our ſanctification, our redemption; but it is in the holy pure meaſure of the heavenly gift that he is made thus of God to us, not out of it.

He ſaith, *The Lord our righteouſneſs redeems us, not properly by the life and Spirit of his Godhead; though that was in the work, ſupporting, enabling him, and carrying him up, in that great undertaking; but by the death and ſufferings of his manhood.*

Anſ. This is ſtrange doctrine, to make the manhood the main Redeemer, and the life and Spirit of the Godhead but the ſupporter and carrier up of the man in the work of redemption; whereas it was the Word which created all, which alſo redeemed; he that left his glory, and made himſelf of no reputation, but came in the form of a ſervant, to do the will. It was the Spirit and life of the Father (even the eternal Son) which took up that body, appeared in that body, offered it up a pure and acceptable ſacrifice to the Father, finiſhing the work therein which the Father gave him to do, John xvii. 4, 5.

He ſaith, *Shall we think to anſwer the law by our obedience?*

Anſ. We do not look upon the law of Moſes, which was given to the Jew outward, to be the diſpenſation of the new covenant, or to be the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus; but thoſe who are in the new covenant, and have God's law written in their hearts, and his fear put there, which preſerveth from departing from him, and his Spirit put within them, to cauſe them to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and do them; and who live in the Spirit, and walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, the righteouſneſs of the law is fulfilled in theſe.

Yet

Yet they do not magnify and cry up their own obedience, (nor call it their righteouſneſs) but him from whom their obedience comes. For in the meaſure of his grace and living truth the ſoul is one with him; and all that he is, and all that he hath done, is theirs; and it is he himſelf that is the righteouſneſs of all that are in him: and they that abide in him partake of his righteouſneſs from day to day, which floweth in like a ſtream upon them.

I wiſh he could conſider in what ſpirit it is that he calls the white ſtone a ticket for the righteouſneſs. Doth he know the white ſtone with the new name? It is no leſs than the foundation-ſtone, than the righteouſneſs itſelf; and what doth he talk of bringing that as a ticket for the righteouſneſs?

He ſeemeth to paſs by ſome things (which I ſpeak in tender love and weightineſs of ſpirit to him) as the judgment of man in his day; but let him take heed, when he comes to appear before God, he then find it was the judgment of God's Spirit in the light of his day; which day is inward and ſpiritual, which believers are to haſten to, and which approacheth in every heart, as the night ſpendeth and paſſeth away. And all true Chriſtians and believers ought to wait for the paſſing away of the night, and the dawning of this day, and the ariſing of the day-ſtar in their hearts.

He ſaith, *Chriſt is now ready to be revealed.*

Anſ. I believe he is to be revealed further, and in fuller glory; but he is truly already revealed as the Saviour, Shepherd, and Biſhop of the ſoul; and many are gathered home to their reſting-place in him, which, while they were ſcattered up and down upon the barren mountains (before the Shepherd appeared and made himſelf manifeſt) they could not find.

He ſeems to ſtrike at the peace and joy which is of God, and to give it a daſh, *Becauſe minds eſtranged from the enlightnings and convictions of God, have much peace in their ways, and ſuch are under deluſions.*

Anſ. We do not tell men of the peace and joy we have in our God boaſtingly; but in a faithful way of

teſtimony concerning, and invitation to, what we once wanted, but now have found, under the leadings of the true Shepherd. And the peace and joy which he gives, is an evidence and aſſurance in the hearts of thoſe to whom it is given by him. And they that have been greatly diſtreſſed for want of the Lord, and his powerful arm of ſalvation, having met with it, it riſeth up from life in them to teſtify and ſay to others, *Lo! this is our God, we have waited for him, and we will be glad and rejoice in his ſalvation.* And oh! that ye alſo were ſtripped of this dead, notional, comprehenſive knowledge concerning the Saviour! That ye might meet with the Saviour himſelf, and receive that knowledge from him which is life eternal. And this, with the true peace and joy thereof from him, ye would find no deluſion.

He ſpeaketh, *Of ſuffering loſs, and of phraſes and expreſſions: Better* (ſaid he) *to ſuffer loſs in theſe, than themſelves to be deſtroyed.*

Anſ. Let him apply this home. Oh! that he ſaw how thoſe phraſes and expreſſions, and imaginary knowledge, which he hath brought forth in this letter, ſtands in his way to hinder the true knowledge; and that he cannot poſſibly receive the true knowledge without being emptied of theſe, and parting with them for the excellency of the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jeſus; and without the true knowledge of Jeſus men cannot but periſh, and be overtaken with deſtruction.

Then for being helpful to eſtabliſh perſons in grace.

Anſ. Such kind of doctrines as theſe do not tend thereto.

They may eſtabliſh men in ſuch a notion of grace as he hath formed; but they neither tend to lead to, nor eſtabliſh in, the grace itſelf, but keep men from it. Nay, I can truly ſay it from him that is true, that he himſelf cannot receive the grace, the thing itſelf, till he part with theſe notions. And oh! that he might know the ſtone cut out of the mountain without hands to daſh his image! that the Living One (who gives life)

life) might be received by him, in that meaſure of grace and truth which he inwardly diſpenſes to all that travel out of the darkneſs of their own imaginations and conceivings upon the ſcriptures into his pure light.

The main reaſon he giveth why he is not ſatisfied with that which I ſent him, concerning the ſum and ſubſtance of the true religion, is; becauſe it fights with his notions, even a ſtating of our righteouſneſs with God, according to his imagination; which is abſolutely a mere dream, which he hath dreamt of in the night, and not ſeen in the light of the day. For the cry of the Spirit of the Lord is in the goſpel-day; *Open ye the gates, that the righteous nation, which keepeth the truth, may enter in.* This is the truth, as God hath revealed by his own Spirit, in this our day; but to ſay this ſpeaks of our ſtate in him, without witneſſing it in ourſelves, is but a mere dream; and men cannot bring forth fruit to God, nor be lovely and pleaſing in his eyes, but as their fallow ground is ploughed up, the thorns, thiſtles, briars, and that which is unclean and unholy, removed.

Chriſt, he ſaith, *is the heavenly man, and manſion in whom we are thus bleſſed, and in whom we ſit down in a ſtate of reſt and reconciliation, heavenly and divine, before and without the conſideration of any works of righteouſneſs which we have wrought, &c.*

Anſ. If he means this concerning the full ſitting down in reſt, it is directly contrary to ſcripture. For none ſit down in that full reſt, before and without conſideration of works of righteouſneſs wrought by them. For that great judgment is a time of rendering to every man according to his works. Reſt is the reward of the traveller, and his travels are not deſpiſed, but conſidered in his reward. Mark; every one that improved the talent, had a reward from his Lord. "And come ye bleſſed of my Father, inherit the "kingdom prepared for you: for I was an hungred, and "ye gave me meat," &c. Mat. xxv. And the apoſtle is of the ſame mind with Chriſt, when he ſaith, "It is

" a righteous thing with God, to recompence tribu-
" lation to them that trouble you, and to you reſt,"
&c. 2 Theſ. i. 6, 7. So that perſons do not ſit down in eternal bleſſedneſs in Chriſt, before or without conſideration of any works wrought by them.

And then for ſitting down in an heavenly divine ſtate of righteouſneſs, reſt, and peace in him here; it is a glorious ſtate to be travelled to. There muſt be a tranſlating out of the kingdom of darkneſs, into the kingdom of the dear Son firſt. The kingdom muſt firſt be come, and the ſoul prepared to enter into it, at the gate which the Spirit opens to him in the way of the goſpel. For it is one thing to know ſomewhat of Chriſt, and to begin to become a diſciple; and another thing to learn of him ſo to deny a man's own wiſdom and will, as to come to receive and be born of that which is true and living of him; and to learn to wait aright for the opening of the gate, and entering into the kingdom and land of life, and to be prepared to ſit down with him.

For there is a ſtate of diſcipleſhip, wherein a man hardly knoweth a ſettlement, ſo much as how to watch with Chriſt rightly and conſtantly; but it is a great matter to be able to dwell and abide with him. None can do this, *but he that can dwell with devouring fire and everlaſting burnings:* for the pure word of life is a fire, and he that ſits down in the heavenly place in him, muſt ſit down in that fire.

This he reckons the firm ſtable ſtate, which indeed is no ſtate at all. There is not a ſtate in Chriſt without being in Chriſt; and then the ſtate is according to the ſoul's being in Chriſt: for then the work of regeneration, the work of ſanctification, the work of juſtifying, &c. goeth on; and a man is with God, according as he is framed and new created in Chriſt, and not otherwiſe. So that the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt is found judging and condemning whatever is not of God; and juſtifying only what is of God in him. For the ſoul then comes into the new covenant, which requireth and juſtifieth that which is

is new, all that is wrought in God; and condemneth all that is wrought out of him. And ſo here is the true ſenſe and knowledge of ſin, by the new and pure law of the new covenant; and the Advocate known, and repentance given by him upon all occaſions, to thoſe that wait upon him, and the ſprinkling of the blood, and the remiſſion upon repentance. This is the new living way of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which he hath conſecrated for all his, (made known in the demonſtration of his Spirit) which will ſtand for ever; whereas mens apprehenſions about thoſe things, which they have gathered and comprehended of themſelves out of the ſcriptures, (in the ſuppoſed light of their natural reaſon and underſtanding) are but dreams, and will vaniſh even in their own hearts, if ever the true light ariſe there.

He ſaith, *This ſtate can never fall, nor be finally fallen from.*

Anſ. There is a way of coming to Chriſt, and there is a way of preſervation in Chriſt. For there is a power that redeems; and men are preſerved by that power in ſubjection to it. And ſo every one, *that thinketh he ſtandeth, is to fear, and to take heed leſt he fall*; and not to boaſt and ſay, *I am in a ſtate of juſtification, which is firm and cannot be moved*; and it cannot fall, nor be finally fallen from. "For ye are kept by "the power of God, through faith unto ſalvation." Keep to the power which preſerves, "hold that faſt "which thou haſt, let no man take thy crown." Keep the faith, make not ſhipwreck of it, and of a good conſcience. Oh! that men knew the right doctrine and way of coming to Chriſt! which they cannot do, till they are taught of the Father, John vi. 45. and the right doctrine and way of ſtanding and abiding in him. For truly mens profeſſed coming to Chriſt, believing and ſtanding at this day, is generally notional, outward, without; but not in the inward life and power itſelf, without which no man can come to him, nor ſtand nor abide in him.

He chargeth us, *With ſetting up a covenant of works; always doing and never done; a covenant to be performed by us, for ourſelves; not by Chriſt for us.*

Anſ. I would he ſaw in the true light how unjuſt and untrue this charge is. For the Lord God of life knoweth that he himſelf hath taught us the new covenant, and thereby taught us to wait upon himſelf in his Son, to work all our works in us and for us; and this we daily experience, that we can work nothing, but as he works in us. Therefore our whole courſe is a waiting on him in ſtillneſs, to witneſs him appearing and doing all in us; and bleſſed be his name, we do not wait in vain. But if he think all works are excluded out of the new covenant, he greatly erreth; for the works of God's Spirit are required and have a place therein; and God and Chriſt (the King and Shepherd) is the Judge of his people in the new covenant, and juſtifieth or condemneth according to the law thereof. In the faith and obedience he juſtifieth; in the unbelief and diſobedience he condemns, without reſpect of perſons.

And it is a precious thing in the goſpel miniſtration to come to God the Judge of all, and to witneſs true judgment ſet up by God in a man's own heart; that by the miniſtration of the pure judgment there, the ſoul may come to learn righteouſneſs, of the holy Teacher and Shepherd, even the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, who is juſt and faithful under his Father, in the impartial miniſtration of the new covenant.

Hereupon ſeveral charges he brings againſt us, through his own miſtakes and miſapprehenſions of us.

As, Firſt, *That our doctrine implies free will and power in the creature.*

Anſ. We have never experienced free will nor power, as of ourſelves, but as we have been turned to God's power, and received it from him; nor did we ever teſtify to others, that they could receive and embrace truth in their own will, and by their own power. Oh! that this perſon had true diſcerning of, and were ſevered from, that ſpirit which thus chargeth us! For whoever

whoever receives this teſtimony concerning the inward light of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, ſhall never find himſelf able to do any thing therein by his own will and power; but there witneſſeth God's begetting him out of his own will, by the life and power of truth.

Secondly, He chargeth it, *That it maketh the election of God altogether fruſtraneous.*

Anſ. Election of the ſeed, in the ſeed, it doth not at all make fruſtraneous; but mens wrong apprehenſions concerning election out of the ſeed, the true doctrine of election doth not conſiſt with. *He hath choſen us in him. So that in him*, to wit, in *Chriſt*, the choice is; and he that will *make his election ſure*, muſt make the *ſeed ſure to him*; growing in the nature thereof, wherein the election is to the truly obedient.

He ſaith, *Our righteouſneſs with God is the foundation.*

Anſ. But is there not ſomewhat, which is the foundation of our righteouſneſs with God? And can we be righteous with God, till we come to that foundation, and be made righteous by it? Muſt we not firſt believe in him? And is not faith a gift which comes from the holy root, and maketh a change in them in whom this gift is found? Doth not faith make a difference between them that believe, and *them that believe not?* So that, ſo ſoon as ever there is true faith, and it thus works, the *ſtate is changed*; and there is no juſtification before faith. For in the unbelief is the condemnation for ever. "He that believeth not, is "condemned already." And what! is he juſtified there too, at the ſame time? Was Abraham, our father, juſtified in the unbelief and diſobedience? Or in believing and obeying God? For what ſaith the ſcripture? "Abraham believed God, and it was counted "to him for righteouſneſs."

That which I ſpoke of, he ſaith, *Is but the fruit and ſuperſtructure.*

Anſ. When Chriſt directs men to the ſeed of the kingdom, doth he direct unto the fruit and ſuperſtructure? I ſpoke there of the ſeed, of the light, of the holy Spirit, of the quickening virtue; is that the ſu-

perſtructure? Or is that the fruit of mens being made righteous? Nay; muſt they not turn to that, receive that, believe in that, even in the light of God's Spirit, (for they are the true and right believers) before a man can come to be made righteous, or accounted righteous in the eyes of the Lord? For none are righteous, but in him; and all are out of him, till they be gathered into him.

He inſtanceth in one paſſage of mine (in a book entitled, '*The Sum or Subſtance of our Religion, who are* '*called* QUAKERS,'), the words are theſe: *This is the ſum of all, even to know and experience what is to be brought down into death, and kept in death; what to be brought up out of the grave, to live to God, and reign in his dominion; and what to be kept in ſubjection and obedience to him, who is to reign. Now to experience it thus done in the heart, the fleſh brought down, the ſeed of life raiſed, and the ſoul ſubject to the pure heavenly power, whoſe right it is to reign in the heart, in and by the ſeed; this is a bleſſed ſtate indeed; for here the work is done, &c.* Theſe were my words.

Now mind; God is the teacher in the new covenant. Now he that hath learned this of him, hath he not learned the true religion? And is not this a full ſum and ſubſtance of religion? When the apoſtle ſaith, "Pure religion, and undefiled before God, is to viſit "the fatherleſs," &c. Alas! might this ſpirit have ſaid againſt the bleſſed apoſtle, that is not the pure religion, (not the ſum or ſubſtance of pure and undefiled religion) that is but a fruit or ſuperſtructure! Oh! that men had true ſenſe and underſtanding! That they might ſavour the words that come from God's Spirit, and the words that come from their own ſpirit; and might not be offended at that which is true, pure, and living of him.

But having diſliked this ſum, he giveth one of his own, in theſe words following: *I ſay, the ſum, and that which firſt and mainly imports us to know, as the Lord hath taught me, is; That the old man is crucified with Chriſt, and brought down into his grave, and that we are riſen*

riſen together with him, by the faith of the operation of God; and from this faith to be working with God; to mortify our members that are on the earth.

Anſ. Doth not Chriſt ſend his apoſtles to preach the goſpel, and give them this meſſage, "That God is "light;" and to turn their minds to the true light, that they might be enlightened by it? Doth it not import men firſt to know that, whereby they might be crucified, before they can know themſelves crucified thereby? So that Chriſt did judge this as the firſt thing neceſſary to be known in the preaching of the goſpel; and bid men preach the light, and turn men to the light, and to the inward appearance and voice of God's word in their hearts. And what! are men riſen together with him, by the faith of the operation of God, while they are yet in their ſins, in their ungodly ſtate? And how can any witneſs the faith of the operation of God in this ſtate? Now it had been better he had forborne affirming, that the Lord taught him thus; for truly the Lord never taught any thus. This is not truth from God, nor will it be owned by the Lord as his truth, when he comes to appear before him; and he ſhould have took it to himſelf, and not have put the name of the Lord to it.

But againſt this his own doctrine, he raiſeth an objection in theſe words; *Shall we mortify that which is mortified already?*

His anſwer is; *The old man, which is crucified together with Chriſt, is the ſtate of the fleſh, and of enmity. This is paſt away, and in this is the concern of our righteouſneſs, and juſtification properly.*

That which remains to be mortified, are our members upon earth, which are the fruits of that evil ſtate; and in the mortifying of theſe, is the concern of our ſanctification. The will of God is done in heaven, &c.

Anſ. Paul ſpeaks of the *law of ſin in his members*; and he alſo ſpeaks of the *body of death*, and cries out againſt that; "Oh! wretched man that I am," ſaith he, "who ſhall deliver me from the body of this "death?" He felt ſomewhat that nouriſhed and gave ſtrength

ſtrength to the law of ſin in his members, and looked upon himſelf as wretched, till he could meet with deliverance therefrom. Now ſome are of opinion that there is no being delivered from the body of ſin, while in this life. Doſt thou look upon it to be done in Chriſt, for us, without us; but never to be done by Chriſt in us? Let me tell thee, if ever thou come to witneſs the pure eternal light of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt revealed in thee; that will not find out ſome members on earth only, but the very body thereof; and ſhew thee the neceſſity of the putting off that body from thee, and that circumciſion whereby it is to be done, which is the circumciſion of Chriſt. Mark the promiſe of the new covenant, "I will circumciſe thine "heart, and the heart of thy ſeed, to love the Lord "thy God with all thine heart, that thou mayeſt live." Is not this the circumciſion of Chriſt? Doth not this cut off the body of the ſins of the fleſh, in the particular where this is witneſſed? This is the truth, as it is in Jeſus, even "to put off the old man with his "deeds." It doth not ſay, *The body is put off in Chriſt without us*, and men muſt only put off *the members or deeds*; but, *they muſt put off the body*, and come to witneſs in themſelves the very nature, ſpirit, root, and principle from whence they proceed, cut down and deſtroyed in them. They muſt feel *the axe laid to the root of the corrupt tree*, and it *cut down* in them (not think it enough to ſay, it is done in Chriſt for them); yea, they muſt alſo witneſs *the Lord ariſing to ſhake terribly the earth*, in which the tree grew; that ſo the place of dragons and ſerpents (where each lay in times paſt) may henceforward *become the place of holineſs*; *where graſs may grow, and the new plants and flowers of the paradiſe of God.*

And how is the will of God done in heaven? Is it done in heaven after this manner? Have mercy and righteouſneſs the preheminence, the leading of the van? (they are his own words) and ſaid to go before, and look down from heaven after this manner (the body of ſin being put off in Chriſt there)? Are there not

not thoſe here on earth, who dwell in heaven? whoſe converſation is in heaven; even the witneſſes to God's holy truth, who are aſcended up above the ſpirit of this world, and dwell in God's holy Spirit; and who walk in the light, as God is in the light? Hell is not far from the wicked; nor is heaven far from them who are renewed in the ſpirits of their minds, and who witneſs the paſſing away of the old things, and the new creation in Chriſt. Oh! that he could look back (in a true ſenſe) and ſee how he hath wreſted thoſe ſcriptures! Pſal. lxxxv. 9, 10, 11. Iſai. iv. 2. and Epheſ. ii. 6. after his own imaginations: and, indeed, in this ſpirit, men cannot but turn the precious truth of God into a lie; that is, as to themſelves, as to their own knowledge of it. It is known how the branch of the Lord is beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth excellent and comely, and in what day it is ſo; which day is, *When the Lord ſhall have waſhed away the filth of the daughter of Sion, and ſhall have purged the blood, &c. by the ſpirit of judgment, and by the ſpirit of burning*, Iſa. iv. 4. *Then every one that is left ſhall be called holy, and the branch of the Lord ſhall be glorious in the midſt of them, and the fruits of the earth excellent and comely for them. And then they that are thus purged, ſhall ſit with Chriſt in the heavenly places; there being an abundant entrance miniſtered to them into the everlaſting kingdom*, 2 Pet. i. 11.

Thirdly, *He chargeth it with making the obedience and ſufferings of Chriſt ſuperfluous, except only as a pattern.*

Anſ. Chriſt came to do the Father's will; to obey, to ſuffer, *to taſte death for every man*; to fight with and overcome the devil; to offer an holy, ſpotleſs ſacrifice for all mankind, that through him they might witneſs atonement and acceptance. And the Lord ſaw the uſe of this, and we witneſs the uſe of this, and find every thing in its proper place and ſervice in him, who is God's covenant of life and peace in us, and to us. But the work of this day is not to preach up a notional knowledge of theſe things, (the Chriſtian world, ſo called, hath been drowned and dead in them long

long enough) but to bring to that measure of the Spirit, to that sense of *grace and truth, which is come by Jesus Christ*; wherein the benefit of these things is truly reaped and enjoyed; and, indeed, that is the work committed unto us from the Lord, who gave us this testimony to bear, whatever men may think or speak of us.

And whereas he speaks of our laying hold of passages, in his printed sermons, to favour our cause:

Ans. That is his mistake as to me; it was for his sake I mentioned it. There was, indeed, at that time, somewhat stirring in him, which would have gathered him, had he known and obeyed its voice, and not run out into lofty notions concerning it. He had some sense then of a glory approaching, which he might have from the true Prophet; though even then he ran out in his imaginations concerning it, and did not rightly apprehend, nor know how and when it appeared.

He hath further charges against us; *Of crying up works against the work-man*; *man's grace and righteousness against God's*; *conformity to Christ against Christ*; *yea, to make a Christ of our righteousness, a Saviour of our conformity.*

Ans. Oh! what will this man do, when the Lord shall shew unto him that he hath charged not so much us, as the Spirit and power, and precious appearance of the Lord Jesus Christ, with these things! We cry up works no otherwise than we are taught of God, and as the apostles and prophets have cried them up. Faith is necessary, and works are necessary in their places; and the justification of each follows them. And he that receiveth the Spirit of the Son, and therein doth righteousness, is therein esteemed of God righteous, *as the Son is righteous*, 1 John iii. 7. God justifieth us in his Son, and loveth his holy seed too therein, and the faith that comes from him, and all the works that are wrought in him; and out of this holy root of life and power is no man, nor his faith, nor his works justified.

Then

Then for man's grace and righteouſneſs. Where doth he hear us ſpeak of man's grace? Oh! what doth he mean? Will he miſrepreſent the cauſe of his neighbour or brother, to make it bad? And for man's righteouſneſs, we do not cry it up or put it on, but teſtify men muſt be unclothed of it; and we ourſelves were fain to part with it, and put it off, before we could be clothed with God's righteouſneſs. But the works of life, the works of God's Spirit, the works of the new creature, the works of the new covenant; theſe are not man's works, nor unrighteous works, condemned by God; but juſtified in and through him that works them. The works wrought in us are truly acceptable, and we in *him who works them*, who is our righteouſneſs. And concerning this people (theſe children of the new covenant) which the Lord hath begotten and brought forth in this our day, that ſcripture is fulfilled in them, and upon them: "Their "righteouſneſs is of me, ſaith the Lord," Iſa. liv. 17. Well! as long as the Lord ſaith ſo, we matter not though others ſay, *that our righteouſneſs is of ourſelves*, and that it is our own righteouſneſs; being aſſured that God's teſtimony in our hearts (as to this thing) will ſtand.

He aggravateth this charge thus: *And this to be done by thoſe that have been ſo far enlightened, and that account all the religion and profeſſion in the world below them as carnal.*

Anſ. Indeed we magnify truth, life, the anointing, the ſpiritual, the inward appearance of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to which we have been turned, and in it made ſpiritual; and all other knowledge, faith, profeſſion, religion (which hath not its riſe here) we cannot but call carnal. For the enlightening Spirit of the Lord hath given us this teſtimony to bear, againſt all the dead notional profeſſors of this age, who build from the letter (or rather their apprehenſions of the letter) out of the life; all which cry up names of the foundation and corner-ſtone; but refuſe, reject, deny, and turn from the corner-ſtone himſelf; and have neither ſkill

ſkill nor patience to try what he is, in this his pure, precious, living, powerful, and glorious appearance in the ſpiritual light of his inward day, after the long thick darkneſs of the foregoing night. And woe would be unto us, if we did not thus teſtify! For, for this cauſe we were born and brought into the world, to teſtify to the preſent appearance of our God, and of his Chriſt, in this our day. Glory to him who hath called and choſen us to, and (in a true and precious meaſure and degree of his own pure life) made us faithful therein.

This (ſaith he) *is ſo far from giving us a lift nearer heaven, that I cannot more properly reſemble it than to the coming forth of Amaleck, who met Iſrael by the way when they were come forth out of Egypt, and ſmote the hindmoſt of them, &c.*

Anſ. Do not talk of having a lift nearer heaven. Oh! learn the way, the holy way, the living way, wherein no dead, unclean thing can walk. Learn to know God's Spirit in yourſelves, from that which oppoſeth his Spirit. Ye have been long learning, after your old conceivings and apprehenſions of the letter; oh! at length come to learn the truth as it is in Jeſus, which diſcovers ſin and death, and the body of it, and crucifies and puts it off, and makes room in the heart for him that is true and pure.

And then for Amaleck's ſmiting Iſrael, Oh! how greatly are ye miſtaken! Ye take yourſelves for Iſrael, and us for Amaleck; whereas, if your eyes were anointed, ye would ſee that we have been begotten and born of God's Spirit, through the Word of life, which was from the beginning, wherein we have been circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, that we might worſhip God in his own pure Spirit, and in his living truth; and that our God hath inwardly appeared to us, and led us out of Egypt's land, and out of Babylon alſo, and all the lands whereinto we have been ſcattered in the cloudy and dark day: and that this is Amaleck's ſpirit in your ſeveral ſorts of profeſſors (through your dark imaginations and

and conceivings about the letter) which riſeth up againſt us; and this ſpirit in you feareth not that God who hath appeared, and by his own holy arm of power hath led, and is leading us. So that we may take up the complaint of the prophet in this day, "Who hath "believed our report? And to whom is the arm of "the Lord revealed?" For though we ſpeak what we have heard, ſeen, and felt of the life which is eternal, and of the "Word which was in the beginning;" yet ye are ſo far from the witneſs of God in your own hearts, that ye cannot receive our teſtimony, but oppoſe it with your dead, dry, notional, conceited, imaginary knowledge, which will ſtand you in no ſtead at all when ye come to appear before God.

Then he proceedeth, complaining againſt us thus: *Ah, Sir! inſtead of clapping us on the back, and miniſtering to us in our journey, you clog our march, and fall upon our rear. Inſtead of ſerving the kingdom of Chriſt, which the church is now in travail of, you deny the firſt principles of the goſpel, and wholly diſown the hope of Chriſt's ſecond appearing and kingdom; knowing or acknowledging, as no other Saviour, ſo no other kingdom, but a principle or a light in yourſelves.*

Anſ. "God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at "all;" and this is the meſſage of the goſpel, 1 John i. 5.

And Chriſt, who is one with the Father, he is one and the ſame light with him; and we confeſs we look not for another beſides him, nor for another kingdom, beſides the kingdom which is revealed in him; for the kingdom which is revealed and manifeſted in and by him, is the ſpiritual, eternal, everlaſting kingdom, and there is not another. We do not ſay the fulneſs, or that the full glory of the kingdom, is now revealed or enjoyed (nay, we confeſs we have but the earneſt, in compariſon, but a meaſure, a proportion); but this is the ſame in nature and kind with the fulneſs itſelf. And all that is of Chriſt, of his Spirit, of his nature, is ſaving; the leaſt meaſure of his grace that appeareth in any heart bringeth ſalvation with it; the leaſt touch

touch of his finger hath pure life and ſaving virtue in it; yet this is not diſtinct nor ſeparate from the fulneſs, and ſo it is not another, though it be not the fulneſs.

But whereas thou complaineſt of our not miniſtering to you in your journey, but clogging it: Oh! that you knew what your journey is, and whither ye are marching and travelling in that preſent ſpirit wherein ye act! We acknowledge it God's great love and mercy to us, to deliver us from that ſpirit, and from that way of knowledge, religion, and worſhip wherein ye ſtill abide. And what we have ſeen and known from the Lord, that are we required of him to teſtify to you; and if your eyes were opened (by the principle of light from him) in the holy anointing, ye would bow to the teſtimony; but judging of it in a contrary wiſdom and ſpirit, ye not only turn from it, but fight againſt it; and reproach and ſlander us for our faithfulneſs to the Lord, and good-will to you; which the Lord make you ſenſible of, and forgive you, that at length ye may know and receive him (who is the deſire of all nations) in his pure, living, inward, and ſpiritual appearance.

And as for denying the firſt principles; that belongs to yourſelves; for do ye not deny that light which is the foundation of all, and wherein and whereby all the myſteries of God's kingdom are ſeen; and inſtead thereof, ſet up a notional comprehenſive knowledge of your own conceiving, comprehending, and gathering from the letter; whereas no man can underſtand the letter but as he comes into and abides in the light? This we have experienced in ourſelves formerly; for we were but gueſſing at and imagining concerning the letter, until we were turned to, and our minds gathered into, and comprehended in, the light of God's Spirit.

And as for diſowning the hope of Chriſt's kingdom, the Lord knoweth that is far from us; for we ourſelves bleſs him for what of his kingdom is already appeared, and wait and hope for the further and fuller appearance thereof.

thereof. But this we confeſs, another Spirit, another Chriſt, another light, another life, another power, another kingdom, beſides him who hath already appeared, we do not expect: for he is our king and kingdom both; and the leaſt proportion of his life and Spirit received (bought with the loſs of all, and ſo purchaſed and poſſeſſed) is no leſs than a pearl of great price, and an heavenly kingdom to him that enjoyeth it.

He addeth further: *If Chriſt be but a principle, then we are no other; and only principles ſhall be ſaved, and no perſons: Is this your goſpel?*

Anſ. Chriſt is the promiſed ſeed, to which all the promiſes are, in which ſeed all the families of the earth are bleſſed, as they are gathered unto, and grafted into, him. But he is not only the ſeed, but the ſeedſman alſo; who ſoweth of his life, of his nature, of his Spirit, of his heavenly image, in the hearts of the children of men. He giveth a meaſure of the grace and truth unto them, the fulneſs whereof he hath received of his Father. Now this meaſure of the light eternal is very precious, and is that wherein he appears and manifeſts himſelf. Yea, indeed, glorious things are both ſpoken and witneſſed of the ſeed of life, of the ſeed of the kingdom, of the grace and truth which comes by Jeſus Chriſt; but we never ſaid that this ſeed or meaſure of life is the fulneſs itſelf, but that which the fulneſs imparts to us, and brings ſalvation home to our doors by. And if any man will receive Chriſt, he muſt receive that from Chriſt wherein he manifeſts himſelf. There is a difference between the light which enlighteneth (the fulneſs of light, which giveth the meaſure of light, the meaſure of anointing to us) and the meaſure or proportion which is given; the one is Chriſt himſelf, the other is his gift; yet his gift is of the ſame nature with himſelf, and leavens thoſe that receive it, and abide in it, into the ſame nature: ſo that not only the gift is one with him, but we alſo are one with him in the gift. Come, be not thus wiſe after the fleſh, nor do not ſtrive ſo

(in thy wiſdom and knowledge out of the truth) to triumph over the truth, and truth's teſtimony, in this the day of God's great love, and glorious arm of ſalvation, revealed in the midſt of his people, which he hath gathered out of Babylon, and the dark knowledge thereof, into the light and kingdom of his own dear Son; where he giveth them eternal life, and of the fruits of the good and heavenly land.

He addeth, *I firmly believe, and ſo have all the ſaints that have gone before, that Chriſt is a perſon, and his Spirit is a living principle in the hearts of all the faithful; but it is not the Spirit or principle in us that did redeem us, but the man Chriſt Jeſus.*

Anſ. If he mean by the man Chriſt Jeſus, *the ſecond Adam, the quickening Spirit, the heavenly man, the Lord from heaven, he who is One with the Father, the Word which was in the beginning, which created all things,* I grant him to be the Redeemer: for it was he *who laid down his glory, wherewith he was glorified before the world was, and made himſelf of no reputation, but took upon him the form of a ſervant, and came as a ſervant, in the faſhion of a man, to do the will.* But if he diſtinguiſh Chriſt from this Word and Spirit, and make the man's nature the Saviour, and the Godhead only aſſiſtant to him, (as he ſeemed to word it before, and as theſe his words ſeem to imply) that I utterly deny. For ſo teſtifieth the ſcripture, "I am the Lord, and "beſides me there is no Saviour. I am a juſt God, "and a Saviour," &c. So that Chriſt is the Saviour, as he is one with God. It was God's arm and power (revealed in him) that effects ſalvation. Yea, if I may ſo ſpeak, his obedience was of value, as it came from the Spirit, and it was the *offering it up through the eternal Spirit* that made it ſo acceptable to God. So that we muſt not attribute redemption originally to him as a man, but as he came from God; and bring the honour all back to the ſpring and fountain from whence he had all, that God may be all in all, and the very kingdom of Chriſt may endure and abide for ever, in the root of life from whence it came.

And

And ſo he is not a foundation or the corner-ſtone diſtinct from God. He, as the foundation, was and is the rock of ages, the ſpiritual rock, both before and ſince he took upon him the body prepared for him. It is the Spirit, the life which was revealed in that man (by which he did his Father's will) which was and is the foundation whereupon all the living ſtones are built. There is a foundation of death, and that is the wicked ſpirit; there is a foundation of life, and that is the Holy Spirit, by which Chriſt himſelf was led and guided, (in that his appearance in the fleſh) which deſcended upon him, and he was anointed with, and all his are to be anointed with, and live in, the ſame Spirit. And he that knows Chriſt in this Spirit, he hath the true and abiding knowledge of him, and no otherwiſe. And though the names *Meſſiah, Jeſus, Chriſt, Saviour, Anointed,* &c. were given to him as in the fleſh, or as man, they moſt properly and originally belong to him with reſpect to the divine life and birth in him, as the ſent-one, *and only-begotten, proceeding from the Father, the brightneſs of his glory,* &c. For he, as the eternal Son of God, was the ſpiritual rock before he took upon him that body which was prepared for him, which expreſsly was called "the "body of Jeſus," and which he called "this tem-"ple;" and diſtinctly, he being called *Jeſus Chriſt come in the fleſh, which every ſpirit that confeſſeth not, is not of God, but is that ſpirit of antichriſt,* 1 John iv. 3.

He ſpeaketh of ſitting on the throne of David.

Anſ. It is a great matter to know that throne which David's throne ſignified, and Chriſt ſitting thereon. His kingdom, his throne, are not of this outward worldly nature, but inward and ſpiritual; and his throne is in his kingdom and temple, where he reigns, and is worſhipped. He that knoweth Satan diſhonoured and caſt out, knoweth alſo Chriſt come in, and ſitting on his throne. Oh! that men did give over their dreaming about the heavenly glory, and come thither in the leadings of God's Spirit where it is revealed.

Was the ſcripture written in vain concerning the glorious ſtate of the goſpel? "But we all with open "face beholding, as in a glaſs, the glory of the "Lord, are changed into the ſame image, from glory "to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Cor. iii. 18.

He putteth up a prayer for us, *That the Lord would awaken us, and make us do our firſt works, and return to our firſt love.*

Anſ. Ah! poor man, how is he blinded! Not diſcerning how the Lord hath done this for us, and much more. But it is he himſelf that hath loſt his firſt love, and doth not do his firſt works; but is found ſhort of that tenderneſs, quickneſs, and ſavour that once was in him. Oh! that he might ſee it, and return to him whoſe quickening virtue reſtores and heals.

He concludeth with the words of the prophet Jeremiah, chap. xiii. ver. 15, 16, 17. "Hear ye, and "give ear; be not proud, for the Lord hath ſpoken. "Give glory to the Lord your God, before he cauſe "darkneſs, and before your feet ſtumble upon the "dark mountains; and while ye look for light, he "turn it into the ſhadow of death, and make it groſs "darkneſs. But if ye will not hear it, my ſoul ſhall "weep in ſecret places for your pride, and mine eyes "ſhall weep ſore, and run down with tears, becauſe "the Lord's flock is carried away captive."

Anſ. How doth this man miſtake in his ſight and application of ſcriptures, ſeeing and applying in a wrong ſpirit? It is true, the Lord hath ſpoken; but he himſelf, and many ſuch as he is, have not given ear. And what is the reaſon? but becauſe they are exalted above the pure principle of life in their own hearts. And are not ſuch proud? Hath not he brought forth theſe weapons, theſe falſe charges and reaſonings, in this paper, againſt the heritage of God in the pride of his heart? As for us, the Lord God hath humbled us, and taught us, who have learned, and daily learn of him, in the humility, and in humilty and fear do we

give

give forth our teſtimony, though alſo in the authority and majeſty of our Maſter's name, whoſe name ſtands over and is exalted above every name, and his mountain and gathering is (in the pure authority and power of his Spirit) above all other mountains and gatherings whatſoever. And as for God's cauſing darkneſs, let him, and ſuch as he is, look for it; for God doth not, nor will, cauſe darkneſs to them whom he hath gathered into the light of his Spirit; but ſaith to them, *Ariſe, ſhine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is riſen upon thee, O city and dwelling-place of the living God.* But thoſe that know not, or turn againſt his appearance, and cry up former diſpenſations of the ſame life and power, but reproach and blaſpheme the preſent, on them doth he cauſe the groſs darkneſs to fall and cover them. And this which he threateneth us with, is already fallen upon himſelf, when his feet are fallen upon the dark mountains; and whilſt he looks for light, he hath loſt that which once he had; and his very light (as he eſteems it) is become obſcurity and groſs darkneſs, as this dark paper of his (from the dark ſpirit and principle) makes manifeſt to all that ſhall read it in any meaſure of true ſenſe or diſcerning. And truly my ſoul doth weep in ſecret for his pride and height of ſpirit, in oppoſing the Lord, his truth, and people. And for this cauſe ſhall thoſe, who have looked upon themſelves as the children of the kingdom and flock of God, be laid waſte; and know, that as it was a dreadful thing to oppoſe Chriſt Jeſus, the Lord, in his appearance in fleſh, ſo it is alſo dreadful to oppoſe his appearance in his Spirit and power, wherein he is ariſen to ſet up his kingdom, and to throw down Babylon, which is built in the likeneſs of Sion, but by and in another ſpirit.

Thoſe in whom there is any tenderneſs towards God (and true breathings after him left) the Lord give them the ſenſe and true underſtanding of this inward ſpiritual appearance of his Son, and of what they have been doing, and are doing, againſt it; that they

may not continue to fight againſt the Lord, and kick againſt that which is able to wound and prick, to their own hurt, and eternal ruin. For there is not ſalvation in any other name than in that which is now revealed; bleſſed are all they that truſt therein, it being not another, but the ſame that ever was.

To his POSTSCRIPT.

HE beginneth it with the juſtification of that paſſage of his in a foregoing letter of his to me, wherein he ſaith, *Chriſt is heaven, and I am hell.*

Anſ. When God viſiteth man, he finds him in union with hell, death, and darkneſs: and the man is dead, is dark, is of an helliſh nature and ſpirit in that ſtate: but when the Lord hath converted him, cut him off from that root, leavened him with the Spirit and nature of his Son, is he hell ſtill? "Ye were darkneſs, "(ſaith the apoſtle) but now are ye light in the Lord. "And ſuch were ſome of you; but ye are waſhed, "but ye are ſanctified, but ye are juſtified in the "name of the Lord Jeſus, and by the Spirit of our "God."

A man can be but hell before he is waſhed, before his filth be purged away by the Spirit of judgment and burning, before the old leaven is purged out, and he ſanctified and made a new lump; but after the Lord hath thus changed him, and new-created him in Chriſt, is he ſtill hell?

He ſaith, *He doth not call the new creature hell; but there is an old man, an outward man, as well as the new man, and the inward man; fleſh as well as Spirit in the regenerate.*

Anſ. What doth he mean by the outward man? The ſinful body, the body of fleſh, is within. The outward body, that is not hell; that is the temple of God,

God, where the heart is ſanctified: and the pure Word of life ſanctifies throughout, even in ſoul, in body, in Spirit, thoſe that are ſubject to it. "Know ye not "that your bodies are the temples of the living God?" And your ſpirits much more; for God is a Spirit, and he dwells in a ſpiritual temple, and his temple is holy.

He addeth, *And unleſs your attainment be beyond Paul's, he found that in him (that is, in his fleſh) dwelt no good thing; and the fleſh luſting againſt the ſpirit, ſo that he could not do the thing that he would.*

Anſ. Paul did once experience ſuch a ſtate; that he felt himſelf *carnal, ſold under ſin*; when he did not find *how to perform that which was good, but did what he hated, the law of ſin being ſtrong (in his members) againſt the law of life in his mind*; which ſtate he calleth *a ſtate of captivity to the law of ſin in his members*, and calleth it *a wretched ſtate*, Rom. vii. 23, 24. But did Paul never experience another ſtate? Did he never witneſs the virtue and power of the new covenant, *even the law of the Spirit of life, and the power thereof, freeing him from the ſtrength and captivity of the law of ſin in his members?* There were young men, John ſpeaks of, *who were ſtrong, and had overcome the wicked-one.* Did Paul himſelf never attain to that ſtate? He bid others *be ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might*, and ſhewed them how to reſiſt in it, ſo as to overcome. Did he never experience and witneſs it himſelf? He ſaid, *He had fought a good fight, and was more than a conqueror.* What! was he then a captive to the law of ſin in his members, and did he then cry out, *Who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death?* He ſaid, *He could do all things through Chriſt, that ſtrengthened him.* Was not that a ſtate different from that other wherein *he found only to will, and could not do the good he deſired, but did the evil he allowed not, but hated?* And bleſſed be the Lord, there are many at this day who witneſs a farther ſtate of redemption and deliverance from ſin, and the law thereof in the members, than that ſtate of captivity was, which Paul

there expreſſeth his former groanings and complainings under. For he was not in that ſtate of captivity when he wrote that epiſtle, but knew the dominion of grace over ſin, and bid that church *be ſubject to the grace, and not give way to ſin, but yield their members ſervants to righteouſneſs unto holineſs*, chap. 6. For that other place, *of the fleſh luſting againſt the ſpirit, and the ſpirit againſt the fleſh*, Gal. v. 17. he doth not there ſpeak of himſelf, but of the Galatians, who were in a weak, low, and (indeed) fallen ſtate, from the Spirit and power of the goſpel, having let in that which was contrary thereunto. And ſo he ſtrives to gather them into the Spirit again, and bids them *live in the Spirit, and walk in the Spirit, and ſo they ſhould not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh:* for in the new covenant man is taught of God the holy leſſon of ceaſing from evil, and doing good; and taught in the virtue and power of the covenant; ſo that he learns daily, and grows daily out of deceit into truth, until he come to be *a true Iſraelite, in whom there is no guile.* And ſo in the ſpiritual war, *the houſe of Saul grows weaker and weaker, and the houſe of David ſtronger and ſtronger*, until Saul's kingdom be at length overturned, and wholly deſtroyed, and the kingdom of David eſtabliſhed in righteouſneſs for ever and ever. Then Jeruſalem, the holy building, the city of the living people, the city of righteouſneſs (the habitation of righteouſneſs, and mountain of holineſs) is known, and Jeruſalem is witneſſed *a quiet habitation, there being peace in all her borders.* Then the mind is fully ſtayed upon the Lord in all conditions, and he keeps it in perfect peace. Then the ſoul is careful for nothing; but in every thing makes its requeſts known to God by prayer and ſupplication, with thankſgiving; and the peace of God, which paſſeth all underſtanding, keeps the heart and mind through Chriſt Jeſus. Surely the apoſtle had learned himſelf (when he taught others this) *in every ſtate to be content.* He knew *how to be abaſed, and how to abound*, &c. O glorious ſtate! O pure ſtate of pure life in the heart! And if I ſhould add, O perfect ſtate!

The

The apoſtle James ſaith, *Let patience have its perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing*, or *in nothing*, James i. 3. When Paul had ſo learned Chriſt, that abundance could not lift him up, nor want deject him, or cauſe him to repine or diſtruſt, what did he want of this perfect ſtate?

His next words are, *If you have no ſenſe of this, your ſtate is never the better to be liked.*

Anſ. Chriſt led captivity captive; and the ſame power is revealed to lead captivity captive in us. And truly when God leads our ſouls out of captivity, putting his fear within us, writing his living powerful law of life in our hearts, and putting his Spirit into us, leading us in the way of holineſs, and cauſing us to walk therein, we find this a better ſtate than when we were groaning under deep captivity.

Further he ſaith, *If your peace and joy ſtand in ſeeing no ſin yourſelf* (in yourſelf I ſuppoſe it ſhould be) *I ſhall more than ſuſpect it not to be the peace and joy of Paul and all the ſaints, but a deluſion.*

Anſ. Our peace and joy is in him who is without ſin; and it abounds in us, in his cleanſing and delivering us from ſin; and we have found him remove ſin as far from us as the eaſt is from the weſt; and as he removeth tranſgreſſion from us, and bringeth ſin and the power of Satan to an end in us, he giveth us of his peace and joy. And truly we do not only witneſs him deſtroying ſin and the works of the devil, but breaking the very head of the ſerpent, caſting him out, *and piercing Leviathan, that crooked ſerpent, and ſlaying the dragon that is in the ſea.* And though ſuch as he may ſuſpect our peace and joy; yet, while Chriſt gives it us, and maintains it in us, it is very ſweet and pleaſant to us; and the time may come, that he may wiſh from his heart that he might partake with us therein.

He concludes the matter thus: *We are without ſin in him, but in ourſelves nothing but ſin.*

Anſ. He ſpake of deluſion juſt before; a greater than this I do not know. For Chriſt doth make a real change;

change; if any man be in Chriſt, there is a new creation, there is a real change. The man is not what he was before; but he puts off that which is old, and puts on that which is new; and ſo is really changed in his ſtate, and in the ſight of God, and is not what he was before. The heart, when it is really renewed, and waſhed by the water, blood, and Spirit, is not the old, abominable, wicked, deceitful heart that it was before. If this be his knowledge and experience, let him keep it to himſelf: for my part I deſire not to partake with him therein; but to be like Chriſt, my Lord and Maſter, even ſanctified throughout in ſoul, body, and ſpirit, that I may become wholly his, and the enemy of my ſoul have no part in me.

He ſaith, *Chriſt ſhall appear without ſin to ſalvation.*

Anſ. I grant it; but when, and how? Doth he not inwardly appear without ſin to ſalvation to thoſe who have waited for, haſtened, and come to the inward day? Doth not Chriſt appear without ſin to ſalvation inwardly in the day of his own Spirit? Is not ſalvation then witneſſed for walls and bulwarks? Is not the glorious ſalvation of the goſpel brought forth in the goſpel-day? And is not there in the life and dominion of grace a pure defence about all the glory? Is there any ſin in the grace and Spirit of the goſpel which appears and ſhines in the day of the Lord? And doth not this grace bring ſalvation to them that wait for the revealing of it?

He ſeemeth to clear himſelf of watching for our haltings.

Anſ. Had he not watched for our haltings, and received things into, and conſidered them in the prejudiced part, he could not have written ſuch a paper againſt truth and us, ſo far from true underſtanding and judgment as this is.

But he ſaith, *He hath watched for our repentings.*

Anſ. If we ſhould repent of having our eyes opened by the Lord, and turning to his truth, and receiving his Holy Spirit, and of having the precious promiſes of the ſcripture made good to us, and fulfilled in us, we

we might juſtly loſe our portion and inheritance of life for ever. We have repented from dead works; but we cannot repent of God's pure truth, and the living way, ſpirit, and power thereof. But this I can tell him, and that from the Lord, whoſe name I reverence and worſhip in, that the Lord watcheth for his repentings, and turnings from that ſpirit in him which darkeneth him concerning, and prejudiceth him againſt, the truth.

He beſeecheth me in love, &c. and requireth me to clear myſelf of free-will, falling from grace, denying election of perſons, and imputed righteouſneſs.

Anſ. What the Lord requireth of me, that I muſt mind; and I have divers times expreſſed my heart nakedly in theſe things.

The principle of life which the Lord hath raiſed in me, in that is the freedom to do good, and in that am I made free by Jeſus Chriſt, my Lord. And I had rather witneſs him upholding me by his power, than contend about a notion of falling or not falling away. And my care hath been about making my calling and election ſure in him, who is ſure to thoſe that are of him for ever. And I have witneſſed the righteouſneſs of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt revealed in me, and imputed to me, and my ſoul clothed therewith in his ſight; bleſſed be his name.

Oh! that the profeſſors of this age might come to the anointing, and ſee thoſe things in the anointing! then would they know the truth and harmony of the ſcriptures therein. But men, by the letter without the Spirit, can never diſcern or find out the myſtery of life; but only gather into their minds and retain a literal knowledge, that killeth.

He bids me, *Love the truth better than a party.*

Anſ. The Lord knoweth he hath taught me ſo to do: for had it not been for the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit in his people, I could never have owned them. (For oh! how low was the knowledge they held forth, in my eye, before the power of the Lord reached to my heart, raiſing up his own ſeed in

in me, wherein I knew them!) And the Lord alſo knoweth, that it is in him that I love, and diſcern, and honour them to this very day: yea, I ſee his name written on their foreheads, and them brought forth in the glorious image and heavenly life of his Son, (though it be hid from the wiſe eye of the profeſſors of this age) and in the true light, with the true eye (which God hath opened in me) have I ſeen it.

He ſpeaks of *Clinging together, and keeping up a party againſt all right.*

Anſ. Nay, nay; this is the gathering of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt by his Spirit and power, after the long night of darkneſs; and we are kept up by the ſame Spirit, and power, and life of truth, which gathered us.

He ſaith, *It is not a calling for a work within, which will give you authority to lay waſte Chriſt and the goſpel, in the moſt fundamental and concerning truths thereof, and thoſe above-mentioned, &c. And above all the reſt, denying the perſon of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and making him but a light, or notion, or principle in the heart of man.*

Anſ. This is but his own miſtake, not a true and juſt charge againſt us, as he will one day ſee. The Lord hath not taught us to lay waſte, nor do we lay waſte any truth of the goſpel; but own every thing in its place. And though our religion do not lie in notions concerning him, but in the principle of life itſelf, even in the grace and truth, which is by Jeſus Chriſt (which is a meaſure of light from him the full light); yet we do not learn thereby to deny the full light, but the more to acknowledge it. And we own him to be the true and full light, and his outward appearance in that body, in the fulneſs of time, to fulfil the Father's will therein; and his appearance in Spirit and power in the hearts of his people in the day of the goſpel; and his ſetting up his ſpiritual and glorious kingdom there, where he reigns as King on the throne of David over the ſpiritual Iſrael of God.

Come,

Come, conſider ſeriouſly: Do not ye yourſelves fall ſhort of not only the principle and power of life, but alſo of the true knowledge of things according to the letter?

He confeſſeth, *There is too little power; and without it profeſſion is little worth.*

Anſ. Oh! that the profeſſors of this age knew the ſcriptures and the power of God, and had that knowledge which comes from, and ſtands in, the power! For then that evidence and demonſtration of truth would be witneſſed which puts an end to the diſputes and reaſonings of the mind; and then the great care would be to live the life of that which God makes manifeſt and requires in the new covenant.

He ſaith, *To pull down the pillars and principles of the goſpel, is the work the devil employs his power in.*

Anſ. I grant what he ſaith is true (and wiſh he knew how rightly to apply it); but there is a great error and miſtake in his judgment about it. For the Lord is pulling down that which men have built up, (which they may, in their miſtaken judgments, call principles and fundamentals) and is building up that which men have trampled on, even the tabernacle of David, which hath long been fallen down; and the city of the living God, which hath long been trodden under foot of the falſe Chriſtians; and the power of the devil is greatly at work to oppoſe this appearance and mighty work of the Lord in this day. Let him take heed of blaſpheming the Lord's power, calling it the devil's, and owning the devil's power for God's.

He concludeth thus: *Come to the point. What ſingular thing do you more than moding and wording it, ſave only that out of you have riſen men, that have more audaciouſly lifted up a ſtandard againſt the ſealed and experienced truths of the goſpel, than ever I have heard or read of any before you? You talk of words, and boaſt of perfection: I tell you, an humble ſenſe of a man's nothingneſs, driving him out of himſelf to live and glory in Chriſt alone, is better than all ſuch boaſted perfections a thouſand times. Sir, accept my zeal for your ſoul.*

Anſ.

Anſ. We are a people (many of us) who have gone through great diſtreſs for want of the Lord our God, and exceedingly waited and longed for his living and powerful appearance. And for my own part, this I can ſay, that had not this appearance been in power, and in the evidence and demonſtration of his Spirit to my ſoul, (reaching to, and anſwering that which was of him in me) I could never have owned it; ſo deeply was I jealous of it, and prejudiced againſt it. And ſince my mind hath been turned to the pure Word of life, even the *Word which was in the beginning*, (I ſpeak as in the Lord's preſence) it hath had ſingular effects on my heart. The light hath ſo ſearched me as I never was ſearched before, under all my former profeſſions; and the Lord hath given me a true and pure diſcerning of the things of his kingdom, in the light which is true and pure; and ſingular quickenings have I met with from his Spirit, and the faith which ſtands in his heavenly power, and giveth victory and dominion in him; bleſſed be his name. And the love which he hath given me is not notional, but ariſeth from his circumciſing my heart, and anſwereth his nature; ſpringing forth purely and naturally towards him, and thoſe of his image, and all his creatures; yea, towards thoſe who are enemies to me for his name's ſake.

I might mention the patience alſo, and faithfulneſs to his truth, with the long-ſuffering ſpirit, which cannot be worn out; which his Spirit teſtifieth in me to be of a ſingular nature; with many other things. Nor am I alone, or the chiefeſt; but have many equals; yea, there are ſuch as far exceed me in the heavenly and divine image of my Father. And the fruits are according to the root of life in us; and ſo acknowledged by all who look upon us with the true eye, with the eye of God's giving and opening.

Now the ſame that hath wrought thus inwardly in us, the ſame hath required ſome outward behaviour and expreſſions from us, which are fooliſh and weak to the eye of man's wiſdom, but choſen of God to hide

hide the glory of this life from that eye which diſcerns it not, but deſpiſes the day of ſmall things. And though this be the leaſt part of our religion, (yet ſubjected to, becauſe it is of God, whom we dare not diſobey in the leaſt) yet the ſpirit which is contrary to God caſteth this upon us, as if this were all, or at leaſt the main, wherein we differ from others. Some call the living words of truth from us (when God, according to his good promiſe, giveth them us) but canting; and thou calleſt all that is ſingular in us but *moding and wording of it.* Alas! it is in the main we differ from you; we holding our religion as we receive it from God, in the light and life of his Spirit: you as you apprehend it from the letter. Chriſt is our rock and foundation, as inwardly revealed; yours but as outwardly conceived of. We believe with the faith which is of the nature of him whom we believe in, which faith is mighty through God, and works through all the powers of darkneſs, giving victory over them all in God's way and time; ye believe with a faith which eſteems victory, and a perfect and entire ſtate, (wanting nothing) as impoſſible while in this world. And as our root differs, ſo all that grows up in us differs from yours: ſo that indeed all is ſingular that is in us, and all alſo is ſingular that is brought forth by us, as the Spirit of the Lord, who knoweth the difference of things, witneſſeth.

Have we ſo long walked in the name and Spirit of our God amongſt you, ſhewing the ſingular virtues of his Spirit daily in our faithful teſtimony, ſufferings, patience, and converſation? And do ye ſtill cry, *What ſingular thing do ye?* Juſt like the Jews, who, after all Chriſt's mighty works, and demonſtrations of his Father's virtue and power outwardly, *aſked for a ſign.* Oh! that your eyes and hearts were opened by the Spirit and power of the Lord! for then ye would ſoon ſee otherwiſe in this reſpect than now ye do.

And then as for that expreſſion, *Of audaciouſly lifting up a ſtandard againſt the ſealed and experienced truths of the goſpel*, that is but an over-confident expreſſion, through

through prejudice and miſtake of judgment at leaſt: for I can truly teſtify I have never learned, ſince the pure heavenly light of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt hath ſhined on my ſpirit, to deny any one truth that ever was ſealed to me, or experienced by me, in the days of my former profeſſion; for whatſoever was then of God hath been reſtored to me, and that only which was of the fleſh pared off. And I have ground alſo to believe, that it is ſo with others in this reſpect as it hath been with me.

He ſpeaks, *As if our difference or talk were about words.*

Nay, it is about things: for though we own the ſame Lord Jeſus Chriſt to be the foundation of life; yet after a different manner. Ye, as ye notionally apprehend concerning him; we, as we experience him to be the precious ſtone and foundation of life in us. And we teſtify of juſtification and ſanctification, as we witneſs him beſtowing it upon us, and working it in us.

But for boaſting of perfection, I wonder how he dares ſpeak thus! What! is there no fear of God before his eyes, or in his heart, that he dares charge us with that which is ſo utterly falſe? Where is any of us that did ever boaſt of perfection? But that God's power and covenant is able to make perfect, and that God's will is our perfect ſanctification in ſoul, body, and ſpirit; even that we be wholly leavened with the ſalt of the kingdom, and become a fit temple for him. This we humbly and reverently teſtify of, and preſs towards, in his holy name and fear.

And as for that humble ſenſe, *of a man's own nothingneſs, drawing him out of himſelf, to live and glory in Chriſt alone,* this we meet with, and witneſs in that light which this generation of profeſſors deſpiſeth. But others, though they may talk of it, can never come truly to witneſs it, but in that light wherein God beſtoweth and preſerveth it.

Well; the profeſſors of this age, who deſpiſe the light, ſhall one day find, that what they take themſelves

ſelves to be, they are not, in God's ſight; nor are we, before him, what we are reproachfully repreſented by them; but "we are his workmanſhip in Chriſt Jeſus, "created by him unto good works;" and that it is natural to us to bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs and holineſs to our God, however men reproach us.

As for his zeal for my ſoul, *which he deſired me to accept*, it is ſtrange zeal, and would tend to my utter deſtruction, had it power over me; but bleſſed be my God, who hath called me into the light of his Son, and I am ſatisfied that he will preſerve me therein, even in that holy Spirit of life which he hath gathered me into, from all deceivable ſpirits of darkneſs whatſoever, in that holy covenant wherein his ſtrength appears to me, and is revealed in me. And oh! that he might know what that ſpirit is wherein he hath thus appeared againſt the Lord, (though under a pretence as if it were for him) and bring forth no more the fruits of it.

For a cloſe, I ſhall add a few words on that ſcripture, Phil. iii. 3. "For we are the circumciſion, "which worſhip God in the Spirit, and rejoice in "Chriſt Jeſus, and have no confidence in the fleſh." It is a precious thing to witneſs this ſcripture fulfilled in the heart; to experience that there, which inwardly circumciſeth, which cutteth off the foreſkin of the heart, which lieth over it and veileth, till it be cut off by the inward appearance of the life and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt inwardly revealed. Then when this is done, I can truly and ſenſibly ſay, *I am a Jew inward*. How ſo? How can that be proved? Why I am inwardly circumciſed. I have felt that within which circumciſeth the heart, and have borne the inward pain and cutting thereof, and am circumciſed by it. That which ſtood between me and the Lord is cut off, the veil is taken away, the ſtiff-neckedneſs and unſubjection to God removed, the wall of ſeparation is inwardly broken down, and now I am in true unity of Spirit and communion with my God, even with the

Father, and the Son, in that One Holy Spirit wherein they are One.

Now I can bow before the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and worship him in his own Spirit, even in the new and fresh life thereof day by day. Now my rejoicing is in Christ Jesus, whom the Father hath sent, both outwardly in a body of flesh to fulfil the holy will, and do what therein the Father had for him to do, and also inwardly in his Spirit and power unto my heart, to destroy the works of the devil there, and so to work me out of the enmity and unreconciled state, into the love and reconciliation. And I cannot but rejoice both in what he did in his body of flesh for me, and in what he doth by his Spirit and power in me. And, blessed be the Lord, I feel him near, his Spirit near, his life near, his power near, his pure virtue near, his holy wisdom near, his righteousness near, his redemption near; *for he is my rock, and my strength, and my salvation, day by day.* And I have no confidence in the flesh, in what I am, in what I can do after the flesh; but my confidence is in him, who hath weakened me, who hath stripped me, who hath impoverished me, who hath brought me to nothing in myself, that I might be all in him, and that I might find him all unto me. He is my peace, he is my life, he is my righteousness, he is my holiness, he is the image wherein I am renewed; in him is my acceptance with the Father; he is my Advocate, he is my hope and joy for ever. He hath destroyed that in me which was contrary to God, and keepeth it down for ever. He is my Shepherd, his arm hath gathered me, and his arm encompasseth me day by day. I rest under the shadow of his wings, from whence the healing virtue of his saving health droppeth upon my spirit day by day. Oh! I cannot tell any man what he is unto me; but, blessed be the Lord, I feel him near, his righteousness near, his salvation daily revealed before that eye which he hath opened in me, in that true living sense wherewith he hath quickened me.

And

And now, ye that have high notions, and rich comprehenſive knowledge concerning theſe things, but not the thing itſelf, the life itſelf, the Spirit itſelf, the new and living covenant, and law of life itſelf, wherein alone Chriſt is livingly revealed. Ah! how poor, miſerable, blind, and naked are you, in the midſt of all your traditional knowledge and pretended experiences concerning theſe things!

Come, be quiet a while, and ceaſe from bitterneſs of ſpirit, and reviling the work and people of the Lord; for the Lord knoweth, and will make manifeſt, both who are his, and who are not his. All the living ſtones are his; but the great profeſſors of the words of ſcripture, without the Spirit and life of the ſcriptures, are not his, nor ever were, nor ever will be owned by him.

Come, learn to diſtinguiſh from God by his life, by his anointing, by the everlaſting infallible rule, and not by words without life, where the great error and miſtake hath been in all ages and generations. The great way of deceit hath long been (and ſtill is) by a form of godlineſs, without power: be ſure ye be not thus deceived; for if ye miſs of the power which ſaves, ye cannot but periſh for ever. And what if the appearance of the Spirit and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt inwardly, which is that which ſaves, be as ſtrange to your ſenſe, underſtanding, and judgment, as his outward appearance was unto the people of the Jews? Take heed of their ſpirit, take heed of their judgment, who judged according to the appearance of things to them, which they imagined and conceived from the ſcriptures, but judged not the true and righteous judgment, which only the children of the true wiſdom can.

POSTSCRIPT.

THERE are *four* or *five* things very precious, which were generally witneſſed in the days of the apoſtles among the true Chriſtians, which are all mentioned together, Heb. vi. 4, 5.

Firſt, *They were truly enlightened.*

The miniſters of the goſpel were ſent by Chriſt, to turn men from darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to God, Acts xxvi. 18. 1 John i. 5. And they were faithful in their miniſtry, and did turn men from the darkneſs and power of Satan to the light of God's holy Spirit; and they were enlightened by it, and received power through it, and ſo came to be children of the light, and to walk in the light, as God is in the light.

Secondly, *They taſted of the heavenly gift.*

What is the heavenly gift which Chriſt gives to thoſe who come unto him, and become his ſheep? He gives them life, eternal life, John x. 27, 28. He brings them out of death, and gives them a ſavour and taſte of the life which is eternal. This was it which the apoſtles teſtified of, even of the life which was manifeſted in that body of fleſh of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt (1 John i. 2.); and they that turn from the darkneſs to his light, he gives them a taſte of the ſame life.

Thirdly, *They were made partakers of the Holy Ghoſt.*

The goſpel is a day of bringing forth the ſpiritual ſeed, and of pouring out the holy Spirit upon them. The law ſtate is a ſtate of ſervants; the goſpel of ſons! and becauſe true believers in Chriſt are ſons, *God ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts to cry, Abba, Father.* And God cannot deny his own Spirit to his children

children that ask it of him; he knoweth how absolutely necessary it is to the state of a son; and whosoever truly receiveth Christ, *Christ doth give him power to become a son*; which power is in, and with, and cannot be separated from, his Spirit. Yea, the Spirit of Christ is so necessary and inseparable from him that is Christ's, that the apostle expressly affirms, that "if "any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none "of his." Rom. viii. 9.

Fourthly, *They tasted of the good Word of God.*

Of that Word from which the gift comes; of that Word which was in the beginning of the world, which is ingrafted into the hearts of those that truly believe; *which Word is able to save the soul.*

Fifthly, *They tasted of the powers of the world to come.*

Of the power of the endless life, whereof Christ is the Minister, and according to which he ministers life, in that holy, true, living, inward, spiritual temple, which he pitcheth and reareth up for an habitation to God in his own Spirit.

Now in the apostasy and night of darkness, which hath come over the Christian state, these things have been greatly lost. For there have been none that have been found able to turn people to that light which the apostle directed to. None could tell men where the light is to shine, and where men were to expect it, and wait for it. None were able to direct men to the seed of the kingdom within, to the Word of faith, the Word of the kingdom, nigh in the heart and mouth; much less were they able to instruct men how they might know and distinguish it from all other seeds, and the voice of the Shepherd from all other voices. Here it came to pass, that though at times God visited and opened mens hearts, a little warming them by the breath which came from himself; yet they not knowing how to turn to the Lord, and wait upon him for preservation in the gift and measure of his own grace, the good hath soon been stolen away from them, and the building which hath been raised up in them hath not been a building of life ac-

cording to the Spirit, but a building of wiſdom or knowledge concerning the things of God according to the fleſh; and ſo the building that hath been raiſed up in mens ſpirits hath been Babylon, inſtead of Sion.

But the Lord hath had a remnant all along the apoſtaſy, who felt ſome begettings of life, and had in meaſure ſome ſenſe and taſte of the heavenly things. Theſe mourned after that ſtate which was once enjoyed, and felt their want of it, travelling from mountain to hill, ſeeking their reſting-place, which none could rightly inform them of. Now, for the ſakes of theſe, God hath at length appeared.

How appeared? may ſome ſay.

Why thus: he who is light hath appeared inwardly, cauſing his light to ſhine inwardly, cauſing his life to ſpring inwardly; ſo that he who is light, who is life, who is truth, is felt and known in his own inward viſits, breakings-forth, and appearances. For God, who is a Spirit, his appearance is ſpiritual, his day is ſpiritual, his kingdom is ſpiritual, his light is ſpiritual, his life is ſpiritual, his day-ſtar is ſpiritual; and his day dawneth, and his day-ſtar ariſeth in the heart.

Thus *the day-ſpring from on high did viſit us, who ſat in darkneſs, and in the region of the ſhadow of death.* And here we have met with what the apoſtles met with, the very ſame light of life, the very ſame enlightening Spirit and power, and have been enlightened by it, and taſted of the ſame gift.

The very ſame grace that appeared to them, and taught them, hath appeared to us, and taught us; and of it we have learned the ſame leſſons, in the ſame covenant of life wherein they learned; and now can we ſeal to their teſtimony in the ſame Spirit wherein they gave it forth, and witneſs to the ſame eternal life, and the ſame holy oil and anointing, our eyes having been opened and kept open by it. And though there be great diſputes about our teſtimony in this our day (and the preſent profeſſors riſe up againſt *us*, as the former profeſſors did againſt *them*); yet let but any man come rightly to diſtinguiſh in himſelf be-

tween

tween that which God begets in the heart, and all other births, and let that ſpeak and judge in them, that will ſoon confeſs that our teſtimony is of God, and given forth in the authority and by the commiſſion of his own Spirit. True wiſdom is juſtified by the children that are born of her; it is the other birth that doth not, nor can own her. The other birth can own former diſpenſations (according to the letter of them); but not the life and power of the preſent.

I have known the breaking down of much in me by the powerful hand of the Lord, and a parting with much (though not too much) for Chriſt's ſake. The Lord hath brought the day of diſtreſs and inward judgment over my heart; he hath ariſen to ſhake terribly the earthly part in me, (yea, what if I ſhould ſay that the powers of heaven have been ſhaken alſo) that he might make me capable to receive and bring me into that kingdom which cannot be ſhaken. And now that which God hath ſhaken, and removed in me, I ſee others build upon, and they think it ſhall never be ſhaken in them; but ſuch know not the day of the Lord, nor the terrible ſearching of his pure light, nor the operation of his power, which will not ſpare in one, what he hath reproved, condemned, ſhaken, and overturned in another. He that knows the living ſtone within, and comes to him as to a living ſtone, and is built upon the revelation of his Spirit, life, and power, (revealed inwardly againſt the power of darkneſs) is not deceived. All that otherwiſe build (I mean upon an outward knowledge concerning Chriſt, and not upon his inward life) their building will not be able to ſtand in the day of the Lord. I wiſh they might have a ſenſe of it in time, that they might not periſh for ever; but experience that life and power of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, which redeemeth and preſerveth out of the periſhing ſtate for ever and ever. *Amen.*

THE ANCIENT

PRINCIPLE OF TRUTH:

OR,

The LIGHT WITHIN Asserted;

AND

Held forth according to true Experience, and the faithful Testimony of the SCRIPTURES:

In the ANSWERS to FOUR QUESTIONS.

I. What this Light is which we testify of, and what is the Nature of it?
II. What it doth inwardly in the Heart?
III. How it cometh to be lighted, set up, and increased there?
IV. How it cometh to be diminished or extinguished in any?

ALSO

An APPEAL

TO THE

WITNESS of GOD in all CONSCIENCES,

Which is the MORE SURE WORD of PROPHECY?

The Testimony of the SCRIPTURES without, or the Voice and Testimony of the Light and Spirit of GOD within, in the Heart.

By one once greatly distressed, but now at length, in the tender Mercy of the Lord, effectually Visited and Redeemed by the Light and Power of Truth,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

THE

PREFACE.

THE true miniſters of the goſpel, the miniſters of the new covenant, were ordained and appointed by God to be miniſters of light, miniſters of righteouſneſs, miniſters of the Spirit, Matt. v. 14. 2 Cor. xi. 15. chap. iii. 6. And this was their work and ſervice, even to preach the light, to deliver their meſſage concerning the light, which they heard of Chriſt, and were ſent by him to preach, as is recorded 1 John i. 5. So that they were to tell men what the light was, and where it was to be found; and to turn men from darkneſs to light, from ſin and unrighteouſneſs to purity and righteouſneſs, from the ſpirit and power of Satan to the Spirit and power of the living God, (Dan. xii. 3. Acts xxvi. 18.) that ſo they might come from under Satan's authority, power, and kingdom of darkneſs, into the light, wherein Chriſt reigns as King, Prieſt, and Prophet, unto and over all his; who is faithful in all his houſe, and Son and Lord of all, diſtributing life, righteouſneſs, mercy, and peace to his whole family, as they abide in him, and walk in ſubjection to his Spirit. So that there is no condemnation to them that are gathered unto Chriſt, ingrafted into him, and who abide in him (walking not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit) who is the quickener, guide, and rule of all the children of the new covenant. For Chriſt is the way, the truth, and the life, in and to them all, and is made by God all in all

unto

unto them. He is their Shepherd, their King, their Captain, their vine, their olive-tree, their leader, their door, their path, their rule, their righteouſneſs, their holineſs, their wiſdom, their redemption, their altar, their ſacrifice, their prieſt, their prophet, their ſabbath, their light, their day-ſpring, their bright and morning-ſtar, their ſun, their ſhield, their rock, and their high tower.

What ſhall I ſay? God hath gathered together all things into One, even in him, whoſe Spirit, life, and light eternal is the One ſubſtance, which anſwers all the figures and ſhadows of the law, and they are all comprehended, and fulfilled, and end in him. So that he is the end of the law for righteouſneſs, to all that believe in him. And he miniſters righteouſneſs, he miniſters truth, he miniſters life, he miniſters ſalvation, he miniſters power, he miniſters pure heavenly wiſdom; and no good thing will he with-hold from them that come unto him in the drawings of his Father, and follow him whitherſoever he leads, and obey his goſpel, which is everlaſtingly new and living.

Now, this precious miniſtry hath been withdrawn, and hid from ages and generations, in the long night of the great apoſtaſy and thick darkneſs. And how could it be otherwiſe? For men being in the dark, and having erred from the true Spirit, and let in a wrong ſpirit, and built up wrong churches; and having not known the true wilderneſs, (nor being willing to flee into it) whither the true church fled, and was nouriſhed by God with the true food, even with the true living virtue and nouriſhment, all this dark night of the apoſtaſy; I ſay, how could they come at the true light, the true Spirit, the true power, (from which the true miniſtry is) which did not viſibly now appear, but was with the true church in the wilderneſs? So that there hath been a true church all this while, which the gates of hell have not been able to prevail againſt, as to her inward temple and altar, nor over the worſhippers which have worſhipped there-

therein) although they have gained the outward court; God having ſevered it from his inward building, and given it to the Gentiles in ſpirit; who are not true Jews, who are not worſhippers in the Spirit, and in the truth, Rev. xxi. 1, 2.

But now, at length, bleſſed be the Lord, the long night of darkneſs draws towards an end; yea, is come to an end in many ſpirits; and the true light is broken forth again, (and ſhineth again inwardly in many) and the true miniſtry is revived again, and the everlaſting goſpel (the everlaſting covenant of life, mercy, and ſalvation, in and through Chriſt Jeſus, the light and life of men) preached again. For now it is not only outwardly read, that "God is light;" but the meſſage hath been received, and perſons choſen, and ſent forth by God to publiſh it; and to turn men from darkneſs to light, and from Satan's power to God. And, bleſſed be the Lord, the publiſhing of this precious teſtimony (in the power and authority of the Moſt High) hath not been in vain. But the captivity of many hath been broken by the power of light, and the power and ſtrength of darkneſs (inwardly) overturned by it. Oh! how hath the ſtrong man, which kept the houſe, before the ſtronger than he appeared in the name and authority of his Father; I ſay, how hath he trembled at the inward and ſpiritual appearance of him that was ſtronger than he? And how have the pillars of the old building been ſhaken? How hath the witneſs of God been reached to in mens ſpirits? How have the dead been raiſed, the blind eye opened, the deaf ear unſtopped, the dumb tongue looſed, the lame cauſed to leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb to ſing, the inward ſpiritual leproſy cleanſed, and done away for ever, the wounded healed, the broken-hearted bound up? And what hath not the Lord done inwardly and ſpiritually for his people, who have been ſenſible of his appearance, and gathered by his Spirit and power to the true Shiloh, who is the true Shepherd, the land of the living,

living, the holy city and temple, the light of the city, the life of the city, the gates and wall of the city, the king and kingdom both? For his life, his nature, his Spirit, is All, and in All. Ah! what do we desire to have, but Christ the seed, and this seed sown in our hearts, and abiding in us, and his life, righteousness and glory, his holy power, dominion, and kingdom, springing up in it? And as, in the apostles days, there was the seal to their testimony in peoples hearts, where their ministry was ordered by the Lord, and was received; even so it is now. Oh! how doth the witness answer in mens hearts and consciences! And they that keep to the witness, and its testimony, not hearkening after words to the wisdom of the flesh; how do they become living epistles, to be seen and read of all men, as the Lord pleaseth to open that eye in any, which can see and read.

Now, to be often testifying of this light (which the Lord hath visited us with, and wherein we experience the knowledge of his Son, and redemption by him), to us it is not grievous; and it is good and safe for others. Therefore, it arising in my heart, in the springings of life, and lying upon me (as in the sight of the Lord) to give forth this further short testimony, for the sakes of such as have any desire to know and experience the truth, as it is in Jesus; I am given up in spirit to serve my God therein; and do give it forth in humility, in fear, in tenderness of spirit, in true love, with breathings to my God, that he would please to open the hearts of those that shall be inclined to read it, that they may feel somewhat of that in themselves, from which the testimony came; and so therefrom may hear, in true sense and understanding, the true and good report of the sound of life and salvation in this our age, and may learn so to turn inwardly from the darkness to the light, from the power of Satan to God's Spirit and appearance inwardly, that the arm of the Lord may be revealed in them, and powerfully stretched out for them.

And

And this is the precious knowledge of Chriſt indeed, even to know Chriſt the power of God, Chriſt the wiſdom of God, inwardly revealed and working in the heart, deſtroying ſin there, and building up the holy building, where he himſelf will dwell and reign. Oh! that all that truly breathe after him, might not be with-held from him (and his living teſtimony, and inward appearance) by the power of darkneſs and deceit, which works ſubtilly in the heart againſt the appearance, power, and work of the Lord there, but might thus come to know him! Amen.

THE

THE ANCIENT PRINCIPLE of TRUTH; OR, The LIGHT WITHIN Aſſerted, &c.

QUESTION I.

WHAT is this light which we ſo earneſtly teſtify of, and whereof we affirm, That all men are (or have been) in ſome meaſure enlightened by it? And what is the nature of it?

ANSWER.

It is that which ſhineth from God in the heart, wherein God is near to men; and wherein and whereby men may ſeek after God, and find him.

God is a Spirit; and his Spirit and preſence is near to all men. "Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit? "Or whither ſhall I flee from thy preſence?" Pſal. cxxxix. 7, &c. It is impoſſible for any ſo to do. For God, who is a Spirit, (and the Father of Spirits) is nigh to every ſpirit. Every ſpirit depends upon him the fountain of ſpirits; and hath its being, life, and motion from him, and in him, after a ſenſe; though not after ſuch a ſenſe, as they who are quickened by him experience.

Now God, who is light, being ſo near every man, doth he never ſhine upon them? They are darkneſs; but

but doth he never appear in the darkneſs? He who is light, loveth mankind; doth he never viſit them with his love? He knoweth what and how great inward and ſpiritual enemies mankind have; doth he never make any diſcoveries of their enemies to them? Yes; the light is near all mankind, to diſcover to them, and help them againſt the darkneſs; and the love is near to help them againſt the enmity which deſtroyeth, and ſo to ſave them. For whoſoever joineth to the light of God's Spirit, cannot but witneſs ſalvation thereby; for it is of a ſaving nature, and bringeth ſalvation with it to all that receive it. Chriſt is in it, and is known by it, (inwardly, ſpiritually, livingly known) and he is not, nor can be known without it. He that knoweth the light of God's Spirit, knoweth Chriſt; and he that believeth in it, believeth in him; and he that knoweth not, nor believeth therein, neither knoweth nor believeth in Chriſt. So that as the Jews circumciſion outward, and their knowledge and thinking to be juſtified by the righteouſneſs and works of the law (which moſt of them brake, and were tranſgreſſors of; though Paul ſaid, he was, "touching the righteouſneſs which is in the law, blameleſs"); I ſay, as this was diſowned, and denied by Chriſt and his apoſtles; and the circumciſion, and work of God on the hearts of the Gentiles ſet over it, and exalted above it, as Rom. ii. ſo is it now alſo. The knowledge of thoſe, and belief of thoſe who own the light, and believe in the light, is owned by God's Spirit (in this our day) for the true believing in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and for that knowledge which is life eternal; and the knowing and believing on him, as men account it, according to their apprehenſions of the letter, without this, is reckoned with God for ignorance and unbelief.

So that in this is God known, in this is Chriſt believed in. Here God draws nigh to every man, and is a God not afar off, but nigh at hand; and his ſalvation is nigh, and his righteouſneſs ready to be revealed here; and here every man may ſeek after and

obtain the knowledge of him, the saving knowledge, the knowledge of the grace, of the gift of grace which brings salvation. In this is the Son kissed, in this is he drawn nigh to, and come to by the soul, and not out of it. Here are the drawings of the Father felt. Let any man feel this, he feels that which begets to God; he feels that which comes from the Son, is of the nature of the Son, wherein the Father draws the heart of the child whom he begets, to the Son. And in this as the soul comes, it comes out of the darkness wherein Christ is not nor dwells, into the light wherein Christ is with the Father; and so in this the soul is ever near, and out of it still afar off. In this is the holy root witnessed, and the ingrafting thereinto; out of this the holy root is not known, nor can men understand what it is to be ingrafted into him, and how he is an Olive-tree, a Vine, a Door, a Shepherd, a Leader, a Captain, a Redeemer. Nor can men possibly know the voice of the true Shepherd from the voice of a stranger, till they come hither; nor how the true Shepherd walks before his sheep, and what it is to follow him out of that which destroys, into that which regenerates, makes new and living, till they come hither.

Now this inward light is abundantly testified of in the scriptures.

As first by Moses, who speaking of the other covenant, the new covenant, the covenant of circumcising the heart, turneth or directeth the mind to this word or commandment nigh, whereby alone it can be done, as Deut. xxx. And this was the reason why God so often commanded the Jews to circumcise their hearts, and to wash them and make them clean from their wicked ways and vain thoughts; because Moses had directed their minds to that, and that was near to them, wherein and whereby it might be done. In another place, he bids them make them a new heart, Ezek. xviii. 31. How could that be done? Why, by turning to God's Spirit

Spirit which ſtrove with them, his power would effect it in them; and men are ſaid to purify their hearts, through the Spirit, in loving and obeying the truth which doth it, 1 Peter i. 22. John xvii. 17.

Secondly, By Job, who ſpeaks of God's candle ſhining upon his head, and of walking through darkneſs by his light, chap. xxix. 30. He ſpeaks likewiſe of thoſe that rebel againſt the light, that know not the ways thereof, nor abide in the paths thereof, chap. xxiv. 13.

Thirdly, By David, who by it ſaw through the types and ſhadows to the ſubſtance, and grew wiſer than his teachers, he knowing the word within, and having his candle lighted by it, ſo that he knew the inward law which converts the ſoul, and was led by God's light and truth ſhining in his inward parts, Pſal. xliii. 3.

Fourthly, By Solomon, "The commandment is a "lamp, and the law light, and the reproofs of in-"ſtruction the way of life," Prov. vi. 23. Every one that experienceth the light, the law, the commandment within, knoweth it to be thus. Again, ſaith he, "The path of the juſt is a ſhining light, "that ſhineth more and more unto the perfect day," chap. iv. 18. Juſt as a light, which ſhines outwardly, is to the outward man; ſuch is the inward light to the inward man; yea more: for inwardly the light and the way is all one. Chriſt is the way, the truth, and the life, which are three names of one and the ſame thing. And he that walks in the light, walks in the way of life and holineſs; which he that walks in the darkneſs walks out of. I ſhall mention but one place more, which is very differently rendered, it is chap. xx. 27. The new tranſlation renders it thus, "The ſpirit of man is the candle of the Lord, ſearch-"ing all the inward parts of the belly." The old thus, "The light of the Lord is the breath of man, "and ſearcheth all the bowels of the belly." The heart of man (the unregenerate mind, the unregenerate ſpirit) is deceitful above all things, and deſpe-

rately wicked; that whereby God ſearcheth it, is his light, his candle, his own Holy Spirit.

Fifthly, By the prophets, as Iſaiah, Jeremy, Ezekiel, Micah, &c. who ſaid, "He hath ſhewed thee, "O man, what is good. And what doth the Lord "require of thee, but to do juſtly, and to love mercy; and to humble thyſelf to walk with thy God?" chap. vi. 8. How doth God ſhew this to mankind, but by the inward light of his Spirit.

Sixthly, By John Baptiſt, who was the fore-runner, and teſtified of Chriſt as of the inward and ſpiritual baptizer, who had his fan in his hand. What is that? What doth Chriſt fan with? What doth he fan, and with what? The light within is a fan, the Spirit within is a ſpirit of judgment and burning; it ſcatters the darkneſs; yea, it conſumes and burns up the droſs and ſtubble there.

Seventhly, By Chriſt himſelf, who ſaid, "This is "the condemnation, that light is come into the world, "and men loved darkneſs rather than light, becauſe "their deeds were evil," John iii. 19. Mark how Chriſt preached the light, (the ſeed, the kingdom, the leaven) and bid men bring their deeds to it, and blamed them that did not, ver. 20, 21. How can there be an inward Jew, an inward circumciſion, without an inward law, inward light, and inward teſtimony? And to this inward law and teſtimony, muſt the inward Jew daily have recourſe, and bring his deeds thither, to be judged and ſcanned there.

Again, Chriſt ſaith, "I am the light of the world: "he that followeth me ſhall not walk in darkneſs, "but ſhall have the light of life," chap. viii. 12. How is Chriſt the light of the world? Or how was Chriſt the light of the world? Was he only ſo, as he appeared in that body of fleſh? Is he not ſo in his inward and ſpiritual appearance? Is he not the univerſal light, the Sun of righteouſneſs, which enlighteneth the whole dark world? Yet again he ſaith, "Yet "a little while is the light with you; walk while ye "have the light, leſt darkneſs come upon you; for "he

" he that walketh in darkneſs, knoweth not whither " he goeth. While ye have the light believe in the " light, that ye may be the children of light," chap. xii. 35, 36. This is Chriſt's direction to men how they may become true believers; to wit, by believing in the light. The light ſhines in the darkneſs, (" ye " were darkneſs) and by believing in it, men become children of it.

Eighthly, By the apoſtles and evangeliſts. They were ſent to turn men from darkneſs to light, Acts xxvi. 18. and they teſtified of the light they were to turn men to; delivered their meſſage that God was light, and that in him was no darkneſs at all. They preached Chriſt the light, the life, the way, the truth; they turned men from Satan's ſpirit, which is darkneſs, to God's Spirit, which is light.

John the evangeliſt teſtified of " the Word which " was in the beginning," and ſaid, " In him was life, " and the life was the light of men. And the light " ſhineth in darkneſs, and the darkneſs comprehended " it not," chap. i. 4, 5. And again ſaith, ſpeaking of him, " That was the true light, which lighteth " every man that cometh into the world," ver. 9.

Paul ſaith, " Whatſoever doth make manifeſt is " light," Epheſ. v. 3. Wherefore " Awake thou " that ſleepeſt, and ariſe from the dead," ver. 14. for God hath ſent forth the light of his Son to rouſe thee. Again, he profeſſedly averreth, that the word nigh in the mouth and heart, was that word of faith which he preached, Rom. x. 8. If ſo, then that is the word of faith which is to be believed in, if men would believe in Chriſt, and be ſaved by him.

James ſpeaketh of God as the Father of lights, from whom every good and perfect gift proceedeth, chap. i. 17. Then ſurely from him is the grace, and the gift (the free gift) by grace, which is upon all to juſtification of life, that receive it, and follow the teachings of it.

Peter ſpeaks of the more ſure word of prophecy, to which men ſhould take heed; and wait (in taking

heed to that) for the dawning of the day, and the ariſing of the day-ſtar in the heart, 2 Peter i. 19. Indeed, all men ought to wait for, and give heed to, the light of God's Holy Spirit, and the holy prophecies, warnings, and directions thereof in their hearts.

And John, at laſt, as I may ſay, in that book of the Revelation, (cloſing up the teſtimony of that age and generation) ſpeaks of walking in the light of the Lamb, chap. xxi. 23, 24. (which every one that comes to witneſs the true light ought to do, elſe there is no true fellowſhip with God, nor with his ſanctified ones, who are gathered into and walk in the light, even as God is in the light, 1 John i. 7.) And the angel that opened the prophecies and myſteries of that book to John, ſaid, that "the teſtimony of Jeſus is the "Spirit of prophecy," chap. xix. 10. So then, he that hath this ſpirit of prophecy, he that hath this inward light, hath the teſtimony of Jeſus; but he that hath it not, hath not the teſtimony itſelf, but only words concerning the teſtimony. For this is the diſtinction between the true believer and the falſe: the true believer hath the ſpirit of prophecy, the witneſs in himſelf, 1 John v. 10.: the falſe believer hath but the outward teſtimony or relation of things; but not the inward ſubſtance, the covenant and law of life within.

QUESTION II.

What doth this light do inwardly in the hearts of thoſe that receive it, believe in it, and give up to it?

ANSWER.

It doth all that is requiſite to be done, from the ſoul's coming out of ſpiritual Egypt into the land of reſt; and all that is needful for its growth and preſervation there.

Firſt,

Firſt, It enlighteneth. It ſheweth what is evil, and alſo what is good, according to the meaſure and proportion of it, and according to God's cauſing it to ſhine in the heart. It diſcovers the myſtery of darkneſs, the myſtery of ungodlineſs, the myſtery of iniquity, the myſtery of deceit in all its myſterious workings; for nothing is hid from the light of him with whom we have to do. And it alſo diſcovers the myſtery of godlineſs, the myſtery of holineſs, the pure way and commandment of life; and gives all the believers (the true believers in Chriſt) this experience, that "his commandment is life everlaſting." There is nothing the heart needs deſire to know of God, but this makes it manifeſt in the due ſeaſon. It opens the very myſtery of the ſcriptures, gives the right underſtanding and application of the promiſes, and fulfils the prophecies thereof in the heart.

Secondly, It doth not only manifeſt the good and evil, but likewiſe inclines the mind to chooſe the good, and refuſe the evil. It draws from the evil, and towards the good; yea, and the ſoul is made willing in the day of him who is light, and who appears in the light, and reveals his power there. There is a way, an highway, ſpoken of, Iſa. xxxv. 8. called the way of holineſs, which the unclean can neither diſcern nor paſs over to; but the light of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, the meaſure of grace and truth wherewith he enlightens men, ſo manifeſts and leads into this way, that they that are taught and guided by him, ſhall walk therein, and not err.

Thirdly, It ſcatters the darkneſs, breaks the power of the enemy; it makes one with him who is all power, and giveth to partake thereof; ſo that power is given to become ſons in the light, to the children of the light; power given to become kings and prieſts to God; power given to reign in the dominion of his life, in the dominion of his truth, over ſin, over death, over deceit; and to offer up the holy living ſacrifices to God.

What ſhall I ſay? It is one with Chriſt, it is of his heavenly Spirit and nature, it makes way for him, it leads to him, it fills with him, it brings into unity and fellowſhip both with the Father and the Son, where the peace which paſſeth underſtanding, and the joy unſpeakable and full of glory, abounds. This is the goſpel meſſage, that God is light; and they that are gathered into and abide in this light, they are gathered into, and abide in unity and fellowſhip, both with the Father and the Son.

David had great ſenſe, and great experience of this light of God's Holy Spirit, and of his truth ſent forth, manifeſted, and revealed in his inward parts, as is ſignified, Pſal. li. 6. and again, in that vehement prayer of his, Pſal. xliii. 3. "Oh! ſend out thy light "and thy truth; let them lead me, let them bring "me unto thy holy hill, and to thy tabernacles. Then "will I go unto the altar of God, unto God the "gladneſs of my joy; yea, upon the harp will I "praiſe thee, O God, my God." Indeed when the light ſhines, and the truth ſprings up in the heart, it leads to him that is true, it leads to the holy hill and mountain of the Lord, and to the inward altar; which they have no right to, who ſerve and worſhip at the outward; and the harp is known whereon the Moſt High is praiſed, even that inward harp, whereof David's outward harp was but the figure. Therefore they that come to the holy hill of God, to the mountain of the Lord's houſe, and to that holy building which was reared there, they invite and encourage others to walk in that light which led them thither, wherein communion with God, and one with another, and the bleſſings of life and peace are enjoyed, Iſa. ii. 5.

But what ſhould I ſpeak of the ſufficiency of the light and grace of the Spirit of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or of what it is able to do, and of what he is pleaſed to work by it? I ſhall only ſay this, that as the fulneſs was enough for Chriſt, and to fit him for the work which he had to do; ſo the meaſure of grace and

and truth which he beſtows, is enough for every man. "My grace is ſufficient for thee," ſaid God to Paul; and ſo it is for every man. There is no want of ſufficiency in the grace of God, in the ſeed of the kingdom, in the pearl of price, in the holy leaven, in the heavenly ſalt; but the virtue and ſtrength of it is greater than the enemy is able to withſtand; and he that keeps to it, and departs not from it, ſhall feel life and power ſpringing up in it, to quicken him and carry him through all that God requires of him. For the water which Chriſt gives is a well, ſpringing up (in him to whom it is given) unto life eternal; and this water is able to waſh, able to nouriſh, able to fill the ſoul with living virtue, which waiteth for it and partaketh of it. And all the nations of them that are ſaved, are to walk in the light of God's Spirit. To this men are to be turned, unto this they are to be gathered, into this they are to be tranſlated (even from the kingdom of darkneſs, into the Son's marvellous light); and being changed by it (into its nature) become light in the Lord, and ought to walk in the light, as God is in the light, 1 John i. 7.

QUESTION III.

How doth the mind come to be enlightened, and the candle of the Lord come to be ſet up in the ſoul?

ANSWER.

By God's cauſing it to ſhine there, and the mind's being turned to it, and given up to be exerciſed by it, as it pleaſeth the Lord to cauſe it to ſhine.

The power of the Lord reacheth to the pure principle of life and light in the heart, in the ſeaſons of his good pleaſure. This being reached to and touched by the Lord, anſwers his touch, his viſit, his call; and the mind being turned to it, ſenſible of it, and willing to let it into its nature and ſpirit, and to become

come one with it (ſuffering with it, and bearing its croſs); the ſeed cometh to grow there, the light which was hid and overwhelmed under the earth (under the earthly wiſdom, the earthly will, the earthly knowledge, the earthly deſires, the earthly delights, &c.) cometh to be lighted up there; yea, the life cometh to be quickened more and more, and the holy leaven to ſpread more and more there. And this ſenſible plant of God's renown being thus entertained, and being not afterwards grieved, deſpiſed, quenched, or hurt, by the giving way to, and letting in of that which is contrary to it, it ſhooteth up into a kingdom of righteouſneſs, into a tree of righteouſneſs, within the compaſs whereof, and under the ſhadow whereof, the ſoul ſitteth down in peace and reſt, and is defended and nouriſhed with that which is pure and living, and full of the pure ſap and virtue, and ſo becomes ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, againſt the power and ſtrength of darkneſs. Now this all men may experience, (at firſt in ſome low meaſure and degree, and afterwards more and more) as they come to feel after, and have a ſenſe of that which is of God, and good in the heart, and come to join and give up to it. For then it will be working againſt, and purging out, that which is of a contrary nature, and overſpreading the heart with its own nature; inſomuch as that which was the leaſt will become the greateſt; and that which was the loweſt of all (and indeed trampled under foot) will riſe up into dominion and power over all, and bring all under. So that the lofty city, the lofty building of fleſhly wiſdom, and of ſin and iniquity in the heart, will be laid low, and the feet of the ſeed ſhall tread it down; even the feet of that which was once poor and needy, until it was anointed, and its horn exalted by the Lord.

QUES-

QUESTION IV.

How is the light or candle of the Lord diminiſhed, and at length extinguiſhed or put out in ſome? Or how cometh that about?

ANSWER.

By their neglecting, deſpiſing, quenching it; hearkening and giving way to the contrary ſpirit in its motions and temptations. For as the good let in, ſtops and works out the evil; ſo the evil let in, ſtops and works out the good: ſo the Philiſtine nature given way to, ſtops the inward well which Jacob had digged and opened. There is a time when life is a myſtery, a fountain ſealed; and there is a time wherein God unſeals the fountain, and opens the myſtery in the heart. Oh! then great care is to be had, and the ſoul is to lie very low in the pure fear, that it may continue in his goodneſs, and walk worthy of his love, that the fountain may be kept open, and the pure ſprings of the holy land flow, and not be ſealed and ſhut up again. For there are ſome that rebel againſt the light, and they dwell in a dry land. There were ſome that did always reſiſt and vex God's Spirit, and the Lord's Spirit ceaſed ſtriving with them, and gave them up to a reprobate ſenſe and judgment concerning the things of God. There are ſome that do not improve God's good talent, and from them that which was once given is again taken away. Yea, the candle of the wicked ſhall one time or other be put out, and they ſhall be ſilent in darkneſs, and their mouth ſtopped from having any thing to ſay againſt God, his truth, and people, for evermore. And all men had need to take heed how they be wanton with the grace of God, or deſpiſe the day of their viſitation by the holy light of God's Spirit; for if God take away the talent, if God put out the inward candle, who can light it again? Oh! how did poor David, the man after

after God's own heart, ſuffer by letting the enemy's temptations in upon him! "Caſt me not away from "thy preſence," ſaid he, "and take not thy Holy "Spirit from me." Indeed he did loſe his condition at the preſent, and he ſpeaks as a man in danger of being quite undone; though afterwards he came to comfort and aſſurance that God would reſtore him to the joy of his ſalvation, and light his candle, and enlighten his darkneſs again.

But I am not inſenſible of what doubts and diſputes there are in mens minds about this teſtimony which we give (from certain knowledge and true experience) concerning the light wherewith God enlighteneth ſouls. At firſt, when the teſtimony firſt came forth, men would not grant ſuch a thing as a light from God in men, which convinced of and reproved for ſin; but now there are many will aſſent to that, who yet cannot believe it to be a meaſure of the grace and truth which comes by Jeſus Chriſt, and that in it the ſufficiency and power of God is revealed, againſt the ſtrength and power of Satan. But let ſuch ſeriouſly conſider,

Firſt, Who they are that have teſtified, and teſtify, of this light. They are perſons who generally have been deeply exerciſed in religion: perſons who have read the ſcriptures very diligently, with much praying and waiting upon God, for the true, certain, and clear underſtanding of them: perſons who (ſeveral of them) have had experience of moſt (if not all other) ſeparated ways, but could never meet with the anſwer of the cry of their ſouls, nor with ſatisfaction to that birth which breathed in them after the Lord night and day.

Secondly, What their teſtimony is; which is manifold. As firſt, that they were by the Lord (even by his Holy Spirit, and the ſhinings and ſpringings of his precious ſeed in them) turned to this light, and ſhewn it to be of God. Secondly, That in turning to it, they ſtill meet with the preſence, appearance, and power of the Lord working in their hearts.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, That it did not only discover sin to them, but also powerfully resist it, fight against it, and bring it under; which no light and power besides the light and power of God's Spirit can do. Fourthly, That the life of the Son is manifested and revealed in it, and they come therein truly to see, and taste, and handle the Word of eternal life. Fifthly, That in this light they come to witness cleansing by the blood of the Lamb, and the everlasting covenant made with them, (even the sure mercies of David) and the holy precious promises fulfilled in them, whereby they are made partakers of the divine nature, and come to witness an entrance into the holy city, and drink of the streams of the pure crystal river, which refresh and make glad the city of our God, and all the tabernacles wherein he dwells. Lastly, to mention no more, The Lord hath shewn them how this had been formerly with them, even in the days of their former profession; and how God had wrought by this in them in former times, though they then knew it not; and that all their ability then to understand any thing of God aright, or to pray unto him, or reap any true benefit from the scriptures, was through the stirring of this in them, whereby God even then, in some measure, enlightened and quickened their minds. For there being such a principle in man, it works variously, and many times when he is not aware of it: and he hath benefit thereby, if he resist it not, but receive its influence and operation, though he hath not the strictest knowledge and discerning of it.

Thirdly, Again consider whether the light of Christ's Spirit, or the grace and truth which is come by Jesus Christ, hath not this property of discovering, convincing, and reproving for sin. Doubtless the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, in the lowest ministration of it, is of that nature, that it discovereth and fighteth against the law of sin and death, wherever it finds it And whether the Comforter, the Holy Spirit of truth, who leads out of all error and falsehood, and into all truth, is not as well to be known by

by this, even by his convincing the world of ſin, and inwardly reproving for ſin, as by his comforting of the ſaints, in their holy travels out of ſin, and battles againſt ſin.

Conſider, Fourthly, whether any thing can convince of ſin but the light of God's Holy Spirit ſhining in the heart? There may be an outward declaration of ſin by the law outward; but it never reacheth the heart and conſcience, but by the ſhining of the light inward. Nay, it cannot ſo much as reach to the underſtanding, but as God opens the heart, and brings home the conviction by his light and power. This we have experience of in the Jews; who though the prophets came with certain evidence and demonſtration from God's Spirit, yet they were not convinced thereby, but ſtood it out againſt the prophets, and juſtified themſelves againſt the voice and Word of the Lord; their eyes being cloſed, their ears ſhut, and hearts hardened againſt that of God in them, as may be read in Jeremiah, chap. ii. and divers other places, even to admiration. And what wickedneſs is ſo great which the hardened man will not plead for, and be defending and juſtifying himſelf in! Yea, if God do open mens underſtandings in ſome meaſure, ſo that they cannot but confeſs ſuch and ſuch things to be evil in general, (as pride, covetouſneſs, drunkenneſs, riotouſneſs, exceſs in apparel, lying, ſwearing, &c.) yet they are not able to ſee the evil and danger of theſe things in and to themſelves, but have covers and excuſes to hide them, unleſs the inward light and Spirit of the Lord ſearch their hearts, and make them manifeſt to them.

Fifthly, Conſider the weight and proper tendency of theſe two ſcriptures, and do not form another meaning, and ſo put off the drift and intent of God's Holy Spirit in them. The firſt is that of the apoſtle, Epheſ. v. 13, 14. "But all things that are reproved, are "made manifeſt by the light: for whatſoever doth "make manifeſt, is light. Wherefore he ſaith, Awake, "thou that ſleepeſt," &c. Every man is bid to awake,

awake, becauſe every man hath ſome proportion of that in him, which (if hearkened to) will reprove, rouſe up, and awaken him, and lead him from among the dead, to him who gives the light, and cauſeth it to ſhine in him, even in the midſt of his darkneſs and corruption, that it might awaken him out of it. The other ſcripture is that of Gal. v. 27. where the apoſtle ſpeaks of the fleſh luſting againſt the Spirit, and the Spirit againſt the fleſh, and theſe two are contrary. Did not God's Spirit ſtrive with the old world; not only with the ſons of God, who had corrupted themſelves, but with the reſt alſo? And what is it that hath ſtriven with wicked men ſince, and that doth ſtrive with wicked men ſtill? Is it not the ſame good Spirit? What is it alſo that inwardly reſiſts and luſts againſt the will and ſtrivings of God's Spirit? Is it not the fleſh? So here are the two ſeeds, the two principles (which are contrary one to the other) near man. For there is the creature man, (which of right is the Lord's) into whom the deſtroyer hath gained entrance, and in whom he rules by the law of ſin and death. Now he who made man, ſeeketh after him, and findeth out his enemy in man, and giveth forth a law againſt him inwardly in the heart; which, ſo far as any man gives ear to, believes, and receives, there ariſeth preſently a fight and ſtriving between theſe two contrary principles in him, ſo that this man cannot do the things that he would. Now that which thus ſtrives againſt ſin in any man, and troubles him becauſe of ſin, reproving and condemning him for it, that is of another nature than the fleſh, (which harbours ſin) and contrary to it.

Laſtly, Conſider the great love of God to mankind, and the great care he hath of them. Firſt, as touching their bodies; how doth he provide for the bodies of all mankind! He would have none hurt, none deſtroyed; but feedeth all, nouriſheth all, making plentiful proviſion, and giving fruitful ſeaſons; cauſing his ſun to ſhine, and his rain to deſcend on all. Then as to their ſouls, he knoweth the precioufueſs thereof,

and

and what the loſs of a ſoul is; yea, he knoweth how eager the devourer is to deſtroy, and ſetteth himſelf againſt him. He is the Father of ſpirits, and his Son the Shepherd and Biſhop of ſouls, whoſe nature it is to gather and ſave; and it is ſaid expreſsly of God, by the teſtimony of the Spirit of truth, that he would have all to be ſaved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. And whereas it was ſaid to the Jews, that God was as the potter, and they as the clay, and he could make them veſſels either of honour or diſhonour at his pleaſure, Jer. xviii. 6. yet it was to this end, even to invite and encourage them to be ſubject to him, that they might be made veſſels of honour by him, as appears ver. 11.

Now conſider, if God be as tender of ſouls as of the bodies of men, doth he not make proviſion for the ſoul as well as for the body? Would he not have the ſoul live, and would he not have the ſoul fed as well as the body? If ſo, then needs muſt the light of his Holy Spirit ſhine inwardly throughout all nations, and the ſaving grace and power be manifeſt every where, even in every heart, in ſome meaſure, and the fleſh and blood of the Son of God (which is the ſoul's food) be diſtributed to all. And truly the Lord is not an hard maſter to any (as the unprofitable ſervant, in every diſpenſation, is ready to account of him); for the times of ignorance and darkneſs God winketh at, or paſſeth over, being very tender towards men in that eſtate; yea, a little that is of him turned to and heeded, according to the meaſure of underſtanding that God gives, will be owned and accepted, even in the midſt of a great deal of darkneſs and evil working againſt it.

There was a time before the law (for the law was given by Moſes): what ſaved then? Was it any thing but the ſaving grace, the ſaving light, the ſaving Spirit, the holy anointing, could any be ſaved but thereby?

What ſaved under the law? Did the ſhadows then ſave, or the ſubſtance of life veiled under them? Did not

not the Spirit then work inwardly, redeem inwardly, ſave inwardly? Did not the word or commandment nigh in the mouth and heart (to which Moſes, by God's direction, had turned their minds) enlighten and ſave inwardly?

And any of the Gentiles, as the Word or Spirit of life did work in them, did it not circumciſe inwardly, and ſave them alſo? So that though they had not the law or miniſtration of Moſes outward, yet they had the inward writing from God on their hearts, and ſhewed the work and efficacy of it there, and ſhall at laſt be juſtified by, and according to, the everlaſting goſpel, which juſtifieth all whatſoever, ſo far as in any meaſure they receive and are ſubject to the light and law of God's pure Spirit, which the carnal mind cannot receive, nor be ſubject to.

Oh! that men could die to themſelves, even to their own wiſdom and prudence, and not lean to their own underſtandings, nor idolize their own apprehenſions and conceivings, but wait to receive underſtanding from God, who giveth liberally of the true wiſdom to thoſe that aſk and wait aright! And how doth God give true wiſdom and underſtanding? Is it not by the ſhining of his light in the heart? Oh! that men were turned inwardly thither, and inwardly dead to that wiſdom and prudence from which God ever hid things, and ever will! He that will be truly wiſe, muſt firſt become a fool, that he may be wiſe; that is, he muſt not ſtrive to learn in the comprehenſive way of man's wiſdom and prudence, the things of God's kingdom; but feel the begettings of life in his heart, and in that receive ſomewhat of the new and heavenly underſtanding, and ſo die to the other, and know no more the things of God after the fleſh; that is, as a wiſe man, as a learned ſcribe, as a great diſputant, (for where is the wiſe? Where is the ſcribe? Where is the diſputer of this world? Can they find out the myſtery of life, the myſtery of God's kingdom in this age, any more than they could in former ages?) but become a babe, a fool, and ſo receive and bow to that which

his own wiſdom will call fooliſhneſs, and account weakneſs; but the other birth, which is begotten and born of God, will know, and daily experience, to be the wiſdom and power of God unto ſalvation.

AN APPEAL TO THE WITNESS of GOD in all CONSCIENCES,

WHICH IS THE

More ſure Word of PROPHECY? The Teſtimony of the SCRIPTURES without; or the Voice and Teſtimony of the Light and Spirit of GOD within, in the Heart.

THE apoſtle Peter ſpeaks of a more ſure word of prophecy (or a more ſure prophetical word, as the Greek hath it) than that voice which came from heaven, which they heard when they were with Chriſt in the holy mount, 2 Pet. i. 18, 19. Now what this more ſure word is, which ought to be given heed to in the moſt eſpecial manner, more than to ſuch an eminent voice and teſtimony from heaven, even from the excellent glory, is a very great and weighty queſtion. Now ſome affirm, that it is the word and teſtimony of the ſcriptures without; others affirm, that it is the voice, ſound, and teſtimony of the Word of Life within.

I do

I do not know a ſcripture that my heart hath been more tenderly ſolicitous about, deſiring to give due honour both to the Spirit of God, and to the holy ſcriptures, and alſo to underſtand what the Lord would have me in the moſt eſpecial manner give heed to, until the ſeaſon came from him, in which he ſhould cauſe the day to dawn, and the day-ſtar to ariſe in my heart. And now, that others might come to the ſame underſtanding and ſatisfaction alſo, are theſe following conſiderations propoſed in the weight of my ſpirit to them.

Firſt, Conſider how ſure the word of prophecy was, how ſure the voice and teſtimony from heaven was; than which, the apoſtle directs them to ſomewhat as more ſure. This I may clearly ſay of it, it was undoubtedly from God, and that in a very extraordinary manner, even in Chriſt's preſence, when Moſes and Elias were with him, and God beſtowing upon him honour and glory, transfiguring him before his diſciples, cauſing his face to ſhine as the ſun, and making his raiment white as the light, Matt. xvii. 2. And the intent of it was to give the diſciples full evidence and ſatisfaction, (for the voice was not for his ſake, but for theirs) or rather that they might have a full ground, after his death and reſurrection, to teſtify for the ſatisfaction and confirmation of others; for till then they were to keep it ſecret, ver. 9. Now that which was provided for this end, doubtleſs was very ſure, and teſtified by them who were choſen to be faithful witneſſes in this reſpect.

Secondly, Conſider whether the teſtimony of the prophets concerning Chriſt were ſurer than the immediate voice from God himſelf? Were they ſurer to thoſe that lived in thoſe days, or to thoſe that ſhould come after, than this teſtimony was to the apoſtles, and to thoſe that did communicate it in the will and counſel of the Lord? The prophets did teſtify from God's holy unerring Spirit; but they that lived in thoſe days did not always believe and receive their prophecies, but ſometimes doubted of them, and

queſtioned them: yea, their prophecies were not always evident, and clearly underſtood by thoſe who deſired to underſtand; but their viſions were many times a book ſealed, both to the learned and unlearned. But this teſtimony, this word of prophecy, this voice from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved Son, "hear him") is a very plain, evident, full teſtimony, eaſy to be underſtood by any in that preſent, or in after ages. And I muſt confeſs, as to myſelf, the reading of it did always deeply affect and ſatisfy my heart.

Thirdly, Conſider the manner of God's appearing to the prophets, and compare it with the manner of this appearance. God appeared to them ſometimes in viſions, ſometimes in dreams. Moſes ſaw a buſh burning, and heard a voice. "The viſion of Iſaiah, "the ſon of Amos," Iſai. i. 1. And Ezekiel ſaw viſions, chap. i. 1. And Daniel had a dream and viſions on his bed, Dan. vii. 1. And Jeremiah had that ſweet prophecy (of God's ſatiating the weary ſoul, and repleniſhing every ſorrowful ſoul) in his ſleep, Jer. xxxi. 26. Now here to theſe bleſſed apoſtles was a viſion given of the glory of Chriſt, and of Moſes and Elias with him; not in the mind or head, as Daniel's viſions were, Dan. vii. 1.; but the excellent glory did appear, and Chriſt, Moſes, and Elias were really there together on the mount, (which is more than a prophetick viſion of a thing) and Chriſt was clothed with, and ſwallowed up in, the glory. For God the Father did ſet himſelf to glorify him, ſo as never man was glorified before; and the voice came (the certain voice; what voice could be more certain?) from the excellent glory, "This is my beloved "Son, in whom I am well pleaſed," 2 Pet. i. 17. And this pure viſion of glory (even of God's thus appearing, and Chriſt's thus transfiguring) they ſaw, and heard the voice which came from heaven, when they were with him in the holy mount. Now were the prophecies of the prophets that Chriſt ſhould be born in Bethlehem, and that he ſhould be thus and thus,

thus, &c. equal to this in evidence and demonſtration? Why was John greater than the reſt of the prophets? Was it not in that he was choſen to be the immediate forerunner and preparer of the way, and could point with his finger to the Meſſiah? And yet is not this immediate teſtimony from the excellent glory greater than the teſtimony of John?

Fourthly, Conſider whether Chriſt's own words in the fleſh to his diſciples were ſurer than the voice from the excellent glory? If I ſhould extol the words of Chriſt in the fleſh above the words of the prophets which teſtified of him, ſhould I therein do the words and teſtimonies of the prophets any wrong? He was the Son; he had the fulneſs of life, the fulneſs of the Spirit, the great authority and virtue of God his Father. "God (ſaith the apoſtle) who at ſundry "times, and in divers manners, ſpoke in time paſt "unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in theſe laſt "days ſpoken unto us by his Son," Heb. i. 1, 2. ſeeming to exalt and magnify God's ſpeaking by his Son, and the way of this miniſtration above the miniſtration of the prophets (which miniſtration was firſt by him in the fleſh, afterwards in Spirit, which is properly called the miniſtration of the Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. 8.) Now conſider whether this ſure word of prophecy from the excellent glory, ſo immediately from the majeſty on high, was not intended by him as a ſeal to the faith of the diſciples, as a ſeal to Chriſt's appearance in the fleſh, and to what he had taught them (which was ſometimes in parables, and not ſo fully underſtood by them); and whether this was not more bright, more raviſhing, more certain, more eſtabliſhing, than his common preſence and appearance among them, and than the words which he from the Father, not the Father ſo immediately himſelf, ſpake to them? For that which is given to confirm a thing, is (in order of nature, and for evidence ſake) more certain and clear than that which it is given to confirm.

Fifthly, Conſider whether the voice of God's Spirit and light within in the heart be not more clear and certain to him that hears it, than any word or teſtimony from without? Is it not a ſurer word of prophecy than this relation or teſtimony of the apoſtles, of what they heard from the excellent glory? Yea, is it not ſurer than any teſtimony of the ſcriptures, or than all outward teſtimonies put together?

Sixthly, Conſider whether they who are turned from darkneſs to the light, even to the inward manifeſtation of God's Holy Spirit, ought not to give diligent heed unto it, until the day dawn, and the day-ſtar ariſe in their hearts?

Laſtly, Conſider what is the difference between this light ſhining (as a word of prophecy) in the dark place, and the day dawning, and the day-ſtar ariſing in the heart? Is it not the ſame light, only further revealed and ſhining in its glory, in the holy and pure place?

The apoſtle Paul excellently openeth the thing, Coloſſ. i. 25, 26, 27. Firſt, he ſpeaketh of the Word in general, which he was to fulfil, or fully to preach. Then he ſheweth how this Word is a myſtery, hid in the Gentiles, (for ſo the Greek, ver. 27. is) even in them that believe not; the Word is nigh there, the inſtruction and commandment of life nigh there. But in thoſe that receive the grace, and believe in the light, and ſo become children of the light, and walk in the light, as God is in the light: in them Chriſt is riſen, and they are riſen together with him, and he is in them the hope of glory. So that the day hath dawned there; the day-ſtar hath riſen, and they know not only a meaſure of grace from Chriſt, but Chriſt himſelf ariſen, dwelling, living, acting, walking in them, and they in him.

Let theſe things be duly conſidered of, and equally weighed in the holy balance, and then I dare appeal to every ſerious and ſober heart and mind, whether the inward light, the inward Word, the Word nigh in the mouth and heart, and the holy living teſtimony thereof,

thereof, the voice of the witneſs within, of the prophecy within, be not ſurer to that man that hath it, and hears and knows the voice of it, than any outward voice or teſtimony whatſoever?

Object. *But ſome may object thus, or after this manner: I am ſatisfied that there is a Word nigh in the mouth and heart, (to which Moſes did direct the Jews, and the apoſtles the Chriſtians) and that this Word doth enlighten the mind, and doth ſeparate in the mouth between words and words, and is a ſwift witneſs againſt the bad words, and a juſtifier of the good words, which come from the truth and uprightneſs of the heart, and are ſeaſoned with grace. I alſo believe that this Word is quick and powerful in the heart, ſeparating and dividing between the thoughts and intents there; and that the teſtimony thereof is ſurer and clearer (as to the hearts in which it ſhines, and to them whoſe ſpiritual ears are opened to hear its voice) than any words and teſtimonies from without. And I am ſatisfied alſo, that they who are the ſheep of Chriſt, do thus hear the Shepherd's voice, and do know both the voice behind them, when it comes after them to reprove their wanderings, and direct their minds into the true way; and alſo the voice before them, when the Shepherd (who is the leader)* putteth forth his ſheep, and goeth before them, and they follow him; for they know his voice, *John* x. 4. *Yea, I have had the experience hereof in my own heart: for I have felt that work within, and that living ſweet teſtimony of God's Spirit in my own heart, which hath been more to me than all that ever I heard or read from without; ſo that I can truly ſay (with the Samaritans,* John iv. 22.) *Now I believe, not becauſe of the teſtimonies or words I have heard from without, but from the evidence and demonſtration of life, and of God's holy Spirit in my own heart. Nor can I ſee how the apoſtle Peter, in this place, can prefer the teſtimonies of the prophets (for that which is called the New Teſtament was not yet written and added to the old) before this glorious immediate teſtimony from God Almighty, which Chriſt was honoured with, and they were greatly honoured in being admitted to be beholders and witneſſes of. Yet*

ſomewhat ſticks with me; namely, thoſe words of the apoſtle, ver. 20, 21. *wherein he plainly ſeems to me to ſpeak of the ſcriptures or writings of the prophets, as if they had been the more ſure word of prophecy, which in this place he had directed to. For why ſhould he ſay thus,* "Knowing this firſt," &c. *unleſs he had intended the ſame Word of prophecy which he had been ſpeaking of before, and directing their minds how they might make uſe of that Word of prophecy?*

Anſ. Peter was the miniſter of the circumciſion, and he was to deal with people who were great admirers and ſtudiers of the letter; therefore, though he, as well as Paul and John, and the other apoſtles, (Rom. x. and Acts xxvi. 18. and 1 John i.) was to direct men to the Word within, and light within, yet he knew it was of great concernment to them rightly to read and be able to underſtand the letter without. Therefore, having firſt directed them to the Word of prophecy, to the path of the juſt, which is the inward ſhining light, to the light which ſhines more and more in the dark place to them that give heed to it; in the next place it was very proper, uſeful, and neceſſary to direct them how to read the ſcriptures aright. For indeed the oracles of God were given to them, Rom. iii. 2. and they ought to be diligent in the reading of them, that they might underſtand the holy prophecies, and precious promiſes, &c. and reap the hope and comfort of them, and be made partakers of the divine nature, which is the thing promiſed. And not only to the Jews, but to the Chriſtians gathered from among the Gentiles in that age, were the ſcriptures greatly uſeful: and ſo they are alſo to ſuch as are gathered by the Holy Spirit and power of God in this age. The prophecies, the judgments, the promiſes, the mercies, the experience, &c. are all uſeful, and profitable to thoſe that read and underſtand them in the light of God's Holy Spirit. But the firſt thing needful is, to turn a man's mind to the light, that he may have ſomewhat to guide him, ſomewhat to ſtay his mind upon in reading the ſcriptures, ſome-

ſomewhat to open and unſeal the holy and divine words and myſteries to him. For no man can truly and rightly underſtand the ſcriptures, but as his mind is opened by the Lord, and the underſtanding of words and things given him. So that this is exceeding neceſſary to be known (after a man is turned to the light and Word of prophecy within, and comes to read the outward oracles and teſtimonies of the Holy Spirit) that all the holy men ſpake not in their own wills, nor in the will of the fleſh, nor in the will of man, but as the Spirit of God gave them words, and moved them to ſpeak. And thoſe words ſpoken by God's Spirit knoweth none, but that Spirit which ſpake them. So that no man ought to venture by his private ſpirit to undertake to open and interpret thoſe words; but he muſt firſt receive the ſame Word of life, the ſame Spirit of prophecy within, and wait upon him, and learn to know his voice, who openeth what and when he pleaſeth to the ſons of men. And ſo when the ſame Word of life ſpeaks in a man's heart now, ſhewing things to come, either concerning a man's ſelf or others, that man muſt be careful to retire, and lie very low before the Lord, waiting upon him for the true underſtanding and right interpreting of his own words, elſe a man may eaſily miſunderſtand and miſapply what was truly and rightly ſpoken. So that this is the right way of underſtanding the words of prophecy from the holy men of God in former ages, and the inſtructions of the Word of life in the heart. "The ſecrets of the Lord are with them "that fear him." In the true fear the ear is opened, and the right underſtanding given; but in the wiſdom of the fleſh, and in the confidence thereof, it is eaſy erring at any time from the true ſenſe and right uſe of that which was opened and given by God, either for the ſoul's own good, or for the good of others.

To conclude this appeal: there is one conſideration on my heart to propoſe to the ſerious and ſober-minded; and oh! that they might rightly conſider and underſtand it! David was a man after God's own heart,

heart, a wiſe man, an inwardly-exerciſed man, an experienced man, an holy, ſpiritual, heavenly man; a man who knew the inward everlaſting kingdom, and had the Spirit of God, and witneſſed his truth in the inward parts: can ye think that David did not know the Word and commandment of life within? Did not God write his law in his heart? How elſe could he become a man after God's own heart? Did not he witneſs the everlaſting covenant, and the law thereof, the new law, the living law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus? Now when David ſaid, "the "law of the Lord is perfect, converting the ſoul," what law did he mean? What is the law which converts the ſoul to God? Can any thing leſs than an inward power, an inward light, an inward law, an inward life, than the inward drawings and teachings of God's Spirit, convert the ſoul to God? And what teſtimony is that which makes wiſe the ſimple? Is it not the inward teſtimony? What made him wiſer than the ancients, and his teachers, who knew and could teach the law outward? Were they not the inward teachings and inward precepts of God's Holy Spirit from the Word of life within, which doubtleſs was very nigh him, he being a man ſo exerciſed by God's Spirit, and ſo formed after his heart? And what are thoſe right ſtatutes which rejoice the heart, and the pure commandment which enlightens the eyes, and the clean fear and righteous judgments? Are not all theſe things known within, and received within? Doth not God put his fear within, in the heart? Doth not God reveal his righteous judgments within againſt ſin and iniquity? Oh! how did David cry out becauſe of God's dreadful judgments upon him for ſin, and ſaid his ſore ran in the night, and he watered his couch with his tears! And in another place, "My fleſh "trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy "judgments." And when he ſpeaketh ſo much (as in Pſal. cxix.) of God's word, God's law, his teſtimonies, precepts, ſtatutes, judgments, &c. what doth he ſpeak of? Doth he ſpeak of the outward or inward miniſtra-

miniſtration of the Word in the heart? Doth he not ſpeak of the inward writing, of the law in the heart, of the commandment in the heart, of the teſtimony of life there? For he had the teſtimony within, the Spirit within, the law within, the light within, the inward and ſpiritual kingdom (wherein the holy dominion of God is revealed) he knew within; and ſo believing, could ſpeak of the power and glory thereof, and of God's wondrous works, Pſal. cxlv. And when he ſaid, "thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto "my path," what Word did he mean? Did he mean the letter or law outward, or the Word nigh in the mouth and heart, which Moſes had teſtified of, and directed the Jews to, and he himſelf had been very well acquainted with? When again he ſaith, "Where-"withal ſhall a young man cleanſe his way?" and immediately giveth the anſwer, "By taking heed ac-"cording to thy Word. Doth he mean the letter without, or the Word within? What is it that cleanſeth the heart, that cleanſeth the way? Is it any thing leſs than the water of life, than the blood of the everlaſting covenant, than the Word of life and truth within? "Sanctify them by thy truth; thy Word is "truth." In the ſenſe of that inwardly, and obedience to it, is the renewing and ſanctification felt. And ſo this brings to be undefiled in the way, and to keep the teſtimonies of life, and preſerves from doing iniquity. "Bleſſed are the undefiled in the way," ſaith he, "who walk in the law of the Lord. Bleſſed are "they that keep his teſtimonies, that ſeek him with "the whole heart. They alſo do no iniquity," &c. Had he no experience of theſe things himſelf? Yea, ſurely. He knew the holy heart, the pure heart, the new and heavenly image, the heart after God's own heart; and he knew what it was to walk in innocency, and to be kept out of ſin. Hear what he himſelf ſaith, Pſal. xviii. 21, &c. "For I have kept the "ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed "from my God. For all his judgments were before "me, and I did not put away his ſtatutes from me.

"I was

" I was alſo upright before him, and I kept myſelf " from mine iniquity." What was that? Was not that it which had moſt power over him, and was moſt apt to entangle and enſnare him? Now he that arrives here, he that doth this, that keeps himſelf from his iniquity, doubtleſs witneſſeth great power and victory over leſſer and ſmaller ſins. Was not David ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might? Did not the Word of God abide in him? Did not he overcome the wicked-one by the power thereof? How elſe could he walk thus in the ways of the Lord, as he expreſſeth, and keep himſelf from his iniquity?

Now this Word of life, theſe living teſtimonies and precepts, yea, the everlaſting ordinances and ſtatutes of the new covenant, with the ſure mercies of David, which Word Moſes had teſtified of, and directed to, and David had experienced, (it being the pearl he had treaſured up and hid in his heart) and which was the Word of faith which Paul and the other apoſtles preached and teſtified of, turning men from darkneſs to this inward light; I ſay, this Word, this living Word (and the inward miniſtration thereof) God hath revealed and made manifeſt in this our day, and hath turned the minds of many to it, and is daily inviting men to Shiloh's ſtreams, to the living waters, to the light and habitation of the living. Bleſſed are they that hear the joyful ſound, and come to the holy mount and city of our God, where life lives and reigns, and is fed on by all the living; who are God's elect, God's heritage, God's vineyard of red wine, God's incloſed garden, whom he watcheth over night and day, and watereth every moment; and in whom he dwelleth and walketh, and is to them a God and Father, and maketh them daily ſenſible that they are his ſervants, children, and ſpouſe, in whom is his great delight, and on whoſe hearts and foreheads is written " Holineſs to the Lord." Yea, and the Lord will bleſs thee for ever, " O habitation of juſtice, and " mountain of holineſs!" And every tongue that riſeth

riſeth up in judgment againſt thee will the Lord God condemn for evermore. This is the heritage of the ſervants of the Lord, whom the Lord hath gathered by the arm of his mighty power, (inwardly revealed and ſtretched forth in them, and for them) " and " their righteouſneſs is of me, ſaith the Lord."

POSTSCRIPT.

There is a Scripture now openeth in me, as it hath often done, and it hath been very ſweet to my taſte; but I have not had freedom to give it forth to others, as at this time it is with me to do: it is that ſcripture Rom. ix. 18. " Therefore hath he mercy on whom he " will have mercy, and whom he will he " hardeneth."

NOW many apprehend from this ſcripture, as I alſo formerly did, that God hath choſen out a certain number of perſons on whom he will have mercy, and ſave by Jeſus Chriſt the Lord; and that he hath paſſed over the reſt, ſo that they were never intended to have any benefit by Chriſt's death as to their eternal ſalvation. This the wiſdom of man, from the letter of the ſcripture and many other places, may eaſily apprehend and ſtrongly reaſon for. But as the Lord openeth the mind, and men come to a ſenſe of his nature and Spirit, and his intent in ſending his Son, and receive the key which openeth the truth as it is in Jeſus, they will eaſily ſee that this is contrary to God's nature, and his intent in ſending his Son, and the univerſal

univerſal covenant of light and life, and the manifeſt teſtimony of the ſcriptures.

Firſt, As touching the nature of God. His nature is *love*; love to all his creatures. He would not have it go ill with any of them. He needeth not their miſery to make himſelf happy. His nature is to love, to bleſs, to ſave; not to deſtroy or cut off, nor to afflict or grieve the children of men; not to hurt either the body or ſoul of any: he preſerveth man and beaſt, Pſal. xxxvi. 6.

Secondly, As touching his ſending his Son. He ſent him in his love to mankind, to ſave mankind. His love was not to a few only; but he loved all his creatures, he loved all loſt ſouls, and he ſent his Son to ſave them all. He gave him light to enlighten them all, and he gave him life to quicken them all; only he diſpenſeth this in different ways, according to the infinite wiſdom and good pleaſure of his Father.

So that, Thirdly, The covenant of light and life is univerſal, and nigh all mankind, by which the darkeſt parts and corners of the earth are at ſome times enlightened, and feel ſomewhat of the quickening life. For the life is the light of men, and the light comes from the life, and is a quick, piercing, quickening light, conveying warmth and life, yea, living virtue into the darkeſt hearts, as it moves and finds entertainment in them.

Laſtly, As for the teſtimony of the ſcriptures, it is very clear that God would have none to periſh. "All ſouls are mine," ſaith the Lord, Ezek. xviii. 4. "I have no pleaſure in the death of him that dieth," ver. 32. And again, "As I live, ſaith the Lord "God, I have no pleaſure in the death of the wick-"ed," chap. xxxiii. 11. I have ſent my light to enlighten all men, and turn all men, and I would have all men receive it, and be turned by it. I have ſhewed every man what is good, and what I the Lord require of him; and I would have every man anſwer the manifeſtation of my light and Spirit in him. Do ye not read God's charge againſt the whole earth,

Iſai.

Iſai. xxiv. 5. that they had tranſgreſſed the law, changed the ordinance, broken the everlaſting covenant? Why then they all had the law, had the ordinance, had the everlaſting covenant; and for this cauſe it is that the curſe and judgment comes upon them, ver. 6. So that this was the condemnation from the beginning, and this is the condemnation ſtill, "that "light is come into the world, and men love darkneſs "rather than light, becauſe their deeds are evil." Men are not condemned for want of light from Chriſt Jeſus; but becauſe they do not believe in, and obey that light which they have from him; becauſe they believe in the darkneſs, believe in the dark ſpirit, believe in the dark power, which riſeth up againſt the miniſtration of light in the heart, and do not believe in that which is given of God to diſcover and work it out. What ſhould I multiply ſcriptures for? That common ſcripture is abſolutely undeniable, (as the Lord opens the heart unto the ſimplicity of truth, and keeps it out of the ſubtil enchanting wiſdom) John iii. 16, 17. "For God ſo loved the world, that he "gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever believ-"eth in him ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting "life. For God ſent not his Son into the world to "condemn the world; but that the world, through "him, might be ſaved." What can be more naked and plain than theſe words of Chriſt, who knew the very heart of God in this particular, and plainly declares what it is, even not to condemn, not to deſtroy, but to ſave men from condemnation and deſtruction? And would Chriſt have ſo affectionately wept over Jeruſalem, had he known it to be his Father's will and determinate counſel that they ſhould have periſhed, and not have been gathered and ſaved by him? I ſhall add but one place more, where the apoſtle (who knew God's counſel, and underſtood the myſtery of election and reprobation, and had the mind of Chriſt) ſaith expreſsly, that "God will have all "men to be ſaved, and to come unto the knowledge "of the truth," 1 Tim. ii. 4. What words can be

ſpoken

ſpoken more plain and full? And let people mind that theſe words are far plainer and eaſier to be underſtood than thoſe ſcriptures which treat of election and reprobation; which is a deep myſtery; and men muſt come to a growth in the truth, before they can receive that capacity which is neceſſary towards the underſtanding of them. But to open the thing a little, as it is now in my heart.

There hath been a three-fold diſpenſation of God to mankind. A diſpenſation of the law to the Jews; a diſpenſation of the goſpel (or promiſe, which was as well before the law as after it) to the called Jews and Gentiles; and a ſecret hidden diſpenſation of the myſtery of grace, of the myſtery of life and ſalvation, which the apoſtle calls the myſtery hid in the Gentiles, Coloſſ. i. 27. For ſomewhat of God, ſomewhat of the nature and Spirit of Chriſt, the ſouls of all mankind have had near them, to enlighten them, and to turn them from Satan's power to God; though it hath not been a thing known to them, but a myſtery hid in them.

Now that God did caſt off any Jew under the law, or any whom he viſits with the grace and power of the goſpel, from a mere abſolute will in himſelf, becauſe he would deſtroy them and have them periſh, to ſhew forth the praiſe of his juſtice, and his abſolute ſovereignty, this the true ſenſe of life in me denies; but all have a viſit of that which ſaves heartily and in true good-will from God; and he that is turned to that which God hath ſent to turn him, ſhall be owned and ſaved thereby. He that believeth in the truth, in the light, in the Word nigh, even in the very loweſt appearance of it, (for the loweſt appearance is the ſame thing in nature with the higheſt, and the grace is ſaving in its very loweſt appearance, as well as in its higheſt) ſhall be ſaved thereby.

Now mark: God's grace, God's mercy, God's love, God's light, God's Spirit, God's power, &c. is his own, and he may do with his own what he pleaſeth. Now it being by this that he ſtrives, converts, and ſaves;

ſaves; and it being in his own will and good pleaſure how long he will ſtrive and contend to ſave; it lieth therefore abſolutely in him, even in his own will, what he will do in this kind. He may take advantage againſt rebellious man, and cut him off when he will; and again, he may ſtrive and raiſe true ſenſe in a man's heart, and give repentance, and pardon his tranſgreſſions, as long as he pleaſeth; yea, he may ſo change a man's heart, and ſo create him a-new in Chriſt Jeſus, and ſo bring him into unity with the pure ſeed, and to that eſtate in the ſeed, as that he may have aſſurance he ſhall never be utterly caſt off; but that though he ſhould ſin, and tranſgreſs the holy law of God's Spirit, his iniquity ſhall be chaſtiſed with ſtripes, and his ſoul recovered and brought back thereby, but not utterly rejected by the Lord. Now it being thus, hath not God mercy on whom he will? And doth not he harden as he pleaſeth? Did not God give up the Jews to hardneſs, after much ſtriving with them? Did not God give up the Gentiles to hardneſs, and to vain imaginations concerning the true God, after they had rejected a meaſure of the true knowledge? Rom. i. 21. Have not the veſſels of wrath, who are fitted to deſtruction, a day of much long-ſuffering firſt? Rom. ix. 22. Had not the old world, who were fitted for that deſtruction of the flood, a long day of patience and forbearance from God, his Spirit reproving of them, and ſtriving with them? To what end did God forbear them, and cauſe his Spirit to ſtrive with them? Was it not to lead them to repentance, that thereby they might have avoided that deſtruction, which, by their rebellion and ſtiffneſs of ſpirit againſt God's good and tender Spirit, they were fitted for, and expoſed to? See Rom. ii. 4. So for Cain, how tenderly did God deal with him! how uprightly did God ſeek his good! Would not God have had him come to a true ſenſe and repentance? Would not God have had him believed and offered in the faith, and been accepted as his brother was? And for Pharaoh, God indeed was againſt that nature and ſpirit in him which oppreſſed Iſrael; but would not the Lord have

had him denied and turned from that nature and ſpirit, and let Iſrael go? God would have no man do evil, and bring upon themſelves deſtruction; though in his juſt judgment he is many times provoked to give men up to that which leadeth into and hardeneth in evil. So not only Pharaoh, but Iſrael alſo, was given up to their own hearts luſts, when they would none of the Lord, nor hearken to his counſel, Pſal. lxxxi. 12. But ſaith the Lord, oh! that it had been otherwiſe! "Oh! "that my people had hearkened unto me!" &c. it ſhould then have been otherwiſe with them, ver. 13, &c.

So that God of himſelf doth not deſire the deſtruction of his creature; nor doth he deſire to harden them, or to give them up to a deluding ſpirit, that they might be damned; but men firſt refuſe the truth, and turn from it, or let it go; not receiving it in the love of it, or not liking to retain the knowledge of it (which is death to the man's corrupt nature, ſpirit, will, and wiſdom, and ſuch a croſs and yoke as he is in no wiſe willing to bear); and then the Lord, in his juſt judgment, gives them up to the deceitfulneſs of ſin, to be hardened by it. Now this liveth in God's own breaſt when and to whom to do it, according to his own will, and according to his own wiſdom and counſel; ſo that it may be truly and properly ſaid, "he hath mercy and compaſſion on whom he will, "and whom he will he hardeneth." But that God hath determined to harden any, without giving them a day of mercy; or that it is God's will and determinate counſel that men ſhould reject the day of his mercy and precious invitation, that they might be hardened by him and periſh; this is not God's truth, but mens miſapprehenſions upon true words, gathering meanings therefrom in their own wiſdom, and not waiting upon God till he cauſe the true light to ſhine in them, and thereby give them the true knowledge and underſtanding.

Therefore, ſince there is ſuch mercy in God towards all, and he hath given all men a day of viſitation, greater

greater or leſſer; yea, ſince of late he hath cauſed his light to ſhine forth, and given this age ſuch a viſitation as many ages have not had, oh! let men take heed how they cloſe their eyes, ſtop their ears, and harden their hearts againſt it, leſt they provoke God to give them up to their own imaginary, conceited, fleſhly comprehenſive knowledge of the letter, and ſo ſeal them up in that hardneſs of heart and deafneſs of ſpirit which they firſt gave themſelves up to. For the letter, without the Spirit, killeth; and ſo doth all literal knowledge: and there needs no greater curſe from God (it will ſufficiently avenge the cauſe of his reproached light, and holy covenant of life in Chriſt Jeſus, now abundantly revealed and made manifeſt) than to cloſe mens eyes, and ſtop their ears, and harden their hearts (in their literal knowledges and practices) from beholding and partaking of the precious life and virtue of the holy and living miniſtration in Chriſt Jeſus the Lord, wherewith God viſiteth and redeemeth his people.

Indeed the phyſician is come inwardly and ſpiritually, and he inwardly heals and reſtoreth his people, faithfully ſeeking after the ſick, the diſtreſſed, the broken, the wounded; pouring oil into their wounds, and healing them. But there are ſome who are ſo ſound and whole in their notional apprehenſions and practices, that they have no need of the phyſician, and them the phyſician paſſeth by, as unworthy of him, and whom he intendeth ſhall have no ſhare with him. "Ephraim is joined to idols," (he is well, he hath enough, he hath no need of me) "let him alone," ſaith the Lord. I will pour out the choice virtue of my ſpiritual life and redeeming power among my gathered ſheep and lambs, who have need thereof, and will rejoice therein. Theſe will know my voice; theſe will juſtify the appearance of my Spirit and power; theſe love the favour of my anointing and precious ointment, which runs down from the head upon all the living body, and theſe ſhall have it. Theſe underſtand how I have mercy on whom I will, and whom I

will I harden; and it is my will to have mercy on theſe my once-greatly-diſtreſſed ones, and to deſtroy (inwardly to deſtroy, oh! who knows what that means!) the fat and the ſtrong, and to feed them with judgment. Oh! that men did know to whom the mercy and to whom the judgment belongs! To the wiſdom of the fleſh, to the wiſe comprehenders of the things of God after the fleſh, is the judgment: to the poor, to the diſtreſſed, to the broken in ſpirit, (not to them that are at eaſe in their literal knowledge, but to the mourners in Sion after the holy God, and his living power and righteouſneſs) is the everlaſting goſpel, the mercy, the love, the peace, the binding-up, the redemption which is by Chriſt Jeſus, the living Miniſter in the holy ſanctuary of our God.

NAKED

NAKED TRUTH:

OR

TRUTH nakedly manifesting itself,

In SEVERAL PARTICULARS,

For the Removing of Hindrances out of the Way of the SIMPLE-HEARTED,

THAT THEY MAY

Come to true Knowledge, Life, Liberty, Peace, and Joy in the LORD, through the Virtue and Power of his precious Truth revealed and working in them.

Given forth by Way of

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

Whereunto are added,

Some EXPERIENCES, with some SCRIPTURES, very sweet, and necessary to be experienced in the Gospel-State.

AS ALSO,

A few Words concerning the TRUE CHRIST;

AND

A few Words in the Bowels of tender Love and Good-will to my NATIVE COUNTRY.

By a long Mourner and Traveller after, but at length an happy Experiencer of, the Truth, as it is in JESUS,

ISAAC PENINGTON.

"Blessed are the Eyes which see the Things that ye see." Luke x. 23.

THE PREFACE.

TRUE knowledge and true experience, eſpecially concerning things of neceſſity, and great concern to the ſoul, is very precious. As; to know the true foundation, the corner-ſtone, which God lays in his ſpiritual Sion; and the heavenly Jeruſalem, which is the mother of all that are born of God; and the gathering out of the ſpirit of this world (with the vanity and falſhood thereof) into God's Spirit, which is truth, and no lie; and the building up of the holy temple, in which God appears, and is worſhipped; and the heavenly communion with the Father and Son, in the one pure light which ſhines from them into the heart; and the one faith, the one circumciſion, the one baptiſm, the one holy mountain, the one feaſt of fat things made thereon; the one water of life, the one bread, the one cup of ſalvation, &c.

Now the things of the kingdom are all at the diſpoſal of the king thereof. To him all power is given, in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge; he hath life in himſelf, and he hath life to diſpoſe of, and diſpenſe to his. He gives the true knowledge, which is life eternal; he gives repentance, and remiſſion of ſins. He teacheth to believe in the Father, and he giveth faith alſo. He is the Shepherd of the ſheep, who by his voice quickeneth, and maketh alive, and leadeth, and preſerveth, and nouriſheth up to life eternal. Therefore, whoever will underſtand aright, muſt receive underſtanding from

him; and whoever will repent aright, muſt receive repentance from him; and whoever will believe aright, muſt receive faith from him; and whoever will hear and ſee aright, muſt receive an ear and eye from him; and whoever will come unto him, and receive him, muſt witneſs that new heart forming or formed in him, wherewith and whereby he is received. Men greatly miſtake and err about the goſpel knowledge and religion, by beginning therein without the goſpel-ſpirit and power.

Therefore that man that would not be deceived, and loſe his ſoul for ever, let him take heed how he begins, how he ſtands, and how he proceeds in his religion. The Jews ſtood in the revelation of God's Spirit and power outwardly; and the ſtate of the Chriſtians, the new-covenant ſtate, ſtands in the revelation of God's Spirit and power inwardly: for none can beget a new-birth to God inwardly, but his own Spirit and power working inwardly in the heart.

Therefore, thou that wouldſt live with God for ever, and not periſh from the preſence and glory of his power, mind theſe three things:

Firſt, God's inward viſiting thee, and making a real change in thee. I do not mean a change in thy mind from one notion to another; but a change in thy heart from one nature and ſpirit to another. This is the great work, which nothing but the mighty power of God, which raiſed Jeſus from the dead, can effect in the hearts of the children of men. Now that this may be wrought out in thee, wait for the appearing and working of that power, which (by its appearing and working) doth effect it daily more and more in thoſe that unite to it, and give up to its operations. Oh! wait to feel the power begetting ſomewhat of its own nature in thee, leavening thee into its nature by the pure heavenly leaven wherewith God waits to leaven thy heart! Thus feel thy beginning from the true root, from the holy principle, from the ſeed of the kingdom; and then wait to feel that grow up in thee, and to grow up therefrom, that

that as the beginning is pure, ſo the growth may be pure alſo. For after God hath viſited thee, and begotten ſomewhat in thee, and leavened thee in ſome meaſure, ſo that there is true life, true ſenſe, true hungerings, true breathings after the Lord and his righteouſneſs, after the fountain of living waters, then (in the next place) mind and wait to learn of the true teacher how to come to the true waters, that thou mayeſt drink thereof, and of no dirty puddle, of thy own or any other's forming. Where are theſe waters diſpenſed, and where are they to be found? Why in the new covenant, which God makes with the hungry and thirſty ſouls, as they come to the Shepherd, and hear his voice, and learn of him, and follow him. Therefore thou muſt wait to diſtinguiſh ſpirits, and the knocks of ſpirits in thy own heart. Thou muſt know when the Shepherd knocks, and when the ſtranger knocks; and let in the Shepherd when he knocks, and not let in the ſtranger when he knocks. Thus, by knowing him, inclining thine ear to him, and hearing his voice, thou comeſt to have the everlaſting covenant made with thy ſoul, even the ſure mercies of David, wherein the union with God is ſure, the teacher ſure, never more to be removed from thee; the fear which God puts into the heart ſure; the law of the new life ſure, being ſo written in thy heart by the finger of God's Spirit, as none can blot out; the love of God ſure, his preſervation ſure, the inheritance of life ſure. O ſweet covenant! O holy covenant! O bleſſed covenant! and bleſſed are all thoſe ſouls with whom God makes this covenant, and who are kept by him in the ſenſe and enjoyment of it!

Now, laſtly, after God hath made this covenant with thee, and ſpoken peace to thee, and given thee of the power, righteouſneſs, and joy of the kingdom, and ſet the holy hedge of his power and wall of ſalvation about thee, thou muſt take heed of going forth after any luſt, after any deſire of the fleſh, after any temptation of the enemy; thou muſt keep within the holy limits,

limits, and not touch any dead or unclean thing, leſt thou be defiled, and ſo in degree ſeparated from him who is pure.

The occaſion of what follows was briefly thus:

There was a controverſy between me and another about many of theſe things, towards whom my love was in a travail; and having a ſenſe on my heart that the enemy makes uſe of the wrong apprehenſions and miſtakes he begets in mens minds about theſe things, contrary to the true knowledge and experience which God giveth to the children which are born of the heavenly womb, who indeed alone can rightly plead for and juſtify their mother, in this day of great ſtrife and contention about the kingdom, and the right heir thereof; I ſay, having this ſenſe on my heart, and theſe things naturally ſpringing up and opening in me upon this occaſion, I was drawn in love, and in the motion of life, thus to give them forth to others, hoping that the Lord may thereby open the minds of ſome towards, and confirm the minds of others in, the ſenſe and belief of the truth, and the inward manifeſtation of his Spirit, which diſcovers and ſtrives againſt the darkneſs, luſts, and corruptions in them. The Lord give people the ſenſe of the ſtrivings and reproofs of his Holy Spirit inwardly in their hearts, and join their ſpirits thereto, that they may receive light, life, virtue, and ſtrength from his Holy Spirit, and thereby witneſs the overcoming and keeping under the enemy of their ſouls, that they may know what it is to have the ſeed of the woman bruiſe the ſerpent's head in their own particulars, that ſo the holy child Jeſus may be exalted, (his horn exalted in them) and he may reign, and exerciſe his government in them, and they may become kings and prieſts to God, and reign in him over all that his power is ordained to break and keep under, yea, utterly conſume and deſtroy, in the hearts of thoſe that ſubmit themſelves willingly to him, and walk in the light and leadings of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

NAKED TRUTH.

GIVEN FORTH BY WAY OF

QUESTION AND ANSWER.

I. *Concerning underſtanding the Holy Scriptures truly and aright.*

Queſt. *WHETHER the ſcriptures can be underſtood aright, without the light of God's Holy Spirit ſhining inwardly in the heart, and giving the true underſtanding of them?*

Anſ. No; not poſſibly. For as the outward eye cannot poſſibly ſee without the ſhining of ſome outward light, no more can the inward eye ſee without the ſhining of the inward light. God, who commanded light to ſhine out of darkneſs, cauſeth the light of his Spirit to ſhine in the hearts of people according to his holy pleaſure, and thereby they come to ſee. God ſeeth all things in his own light, in the light of his pure eternal Spirit; and in his light do the children of light ſee light. The things of God's kingdom are holy myſteries, and the words which he ſpeaks concerning thoſe holy myſteries none can underſtand, but as he pleaſeth to open and reveal them. He hath given us an underſtanding to know him that is true, 1 John v. 20. "The inſpiration of the Al-"mighty giveth underſtanding," (Job xxxii. 8.) without which, man is dead, and can neither hear, nor ſee, nor underſtand any of the things of God's kingdom.

II. *Con-*

II. *Concerning the illuminating Spirit, and ſanctifying Spirit.*

Queſt. *Whether the illuminating and ſanctifying Spirit be one and the ſame Spirit or no? becauſe it is affirmed by ſome (and written by one to me as a ſound diſtinction of divines, which diſtinction he ſaith he hath a mind I ſhould learn) that there is a Spirit of ſanctification, and that is peculiar to the godly; and there is a Spirit illuminating, and that is oft vouchſafed to the wicked, as it was to Balaam.*

Anſ. The Spirit which illuminateth, and the Spirit which ſanctifieth, is one and the ſame Spirit; and the illumination of the Spirit is in order unto ſanctification. The ſame light which diſcovereth the darkneſs, alſo chaſeth away the darkneſs, as it is received and ſubjected to, and purifieth the mind; for the light hath not only a property of enlightening, but alſo of cleanſing and ſanctifying. And the reaſon why men are not changed, juſtified, and ſanctified, in and by the light, is becauſe they love it not, and bring not their hearts and deeds to it; and ſo it is their reprover and condemner, and not their juſtifier and ſanctifier. But the ſame Spirit, light, and life which enlightneth, alſo ſanctifieth, and there is not another.

III. *Concerning the Holy Spirit of God, and the Holy Scriptures.*

Queſt. *Whether they be always joined; or ſome may have the Spirit, who have not the ſcriptures; and ſome may have the ſcriptures, who have not the Spirit?*

Anſ. The Holy Spirit of God, and the holy ſcriptures, are not always joined together; for ſome in the dark corners of the earth may be viſited by the Spirit, become ſenſible of the Spirit, and receive the Spirit, who never heard of the ſcriptures; and many may have

have the ſcriptures, and yet be very ignorant of, and ſtrangers to, God's Holy Spirit; as the Jews were, who had them read in their ſynagogues every ſabbath-day, and yet Chriſt told them, "Ye neither know "the ſcriptures, nor the power of God."

IV. *Concerning the Law of the Lord, which is perfect, and which converts the ſoul.*

Queſt. *What is the law of the Lord, which is perfect, and converts the ſoul? Is it the outward law or writing in the letter, or the inward law and writing in the Spirit?*

Anſ. No man is, or ever was, or ever can be, converted to God from the inward law of ſin and death, but by the inward law of life and righteouſneſs written in the heart; and I am ſure that law is perfect, the new covenant is perfect, and the law thereof perfect; the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus perfect, which converts the mind to Chriſt, the righteouſneſs of God, and ſets it free from the law of ſin and death. And David was a ſpiritual man, and knew the inward covenant, and the inward creating of the heart anew, and God's holy and free Spirit, and the law and teſtimony thereof. I will grant a great deal to the letter and miniſtration outward; but I muſt attribute more to the inward; or elſe God's light, and the holy experience which he hath given me, will condemn me. And as the Jew outward had the law, and teſtimony, and ſtatutes outward; ſo I am ſure the true Jew, the Jew inward, hath the law, and teſtimony, and ſtatutes inward, written in his heart by the finger of God's Spirit; yea, and the ſame Spirit put within him, to cauſe him to keep this law, and the holy teſtimony, ſtatutes, and judgments of the Lord; and the ſpiritual Jacob, and Iſrael of God, in this the day of their redemption and ſalvation from on high, do follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes, and walk in the light of the Lord.

V. *Con-*

V. *Concerning David's longings, expreſſed in Pſal.* xlii. xliii. cxix. *and other places.*

Queſt. *Were David's longings more after the law outward, or after the law and light of God's Spirit inward?*

Anſ. David was a man after God's own heart; a man that knew an inward and clean heart of God's creating, and knew the free Spirit of the Lord, and the freſh ſpringing life thereof, and the leadings of the pure living truth inwardly in his heart, and this was it he moſt eſpecially prized and longed after. "Create "in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right "ſpirit within me, and take not thy Holy Spirit from "me," &c. ſaith he (Pſal. li. 10, 11.) after his fall, ſhewing what he had been acquainted with before, and what he now (God having touched his ſpirit afreſh) began to long after again. And ſaith he, in another place, "Oh! ſend out thy light and thy "truth; let them lead me, let them bring me unto "thy hill, and to thy tabernacles," Pſal. xliii. 3. Oh! the ſweetneſs of light within, truth within! Oh! the precious leadings and drawings thereof, which were once felt, upon a freſh and tender remembrance thereof, cannot but be longed after again!

VI. *Concerning the Sun, or Fountain of ſpiritual light.*

Queſt. *Whether the holy ſcriptures, or written teſtimonies, be the ſun or fountain, and the light within but a ray or ſtream from them? (as is affirmed by my antagoniſt).*

Anſ. It is juſt quite contrary: for the holy men ſpake the holy words from the inward light and quickening life of God's Spirit within them; ſo that that was the fountain in them, and is ſo ſtill. "With thee "is the fountain of life; and he that believeth," as the ſcriptures have ſaid, "out of his belly ſhall flow "rivers of living water. This ſpake he of the Spirit,"

(John)

(John vii. 39.) that is the fountain. "The water "that I ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of "water ſpringing up into everlaſting life," John iv. 14. Who eſteems and honours the ſcriptures aright? He that believes their teſtimony, comes to Chriſt, and makes his Spirit, light, and life all; or he that ſets the ſcriptures in the ſtead of that Word of life which they came from, teſtify of, and point men to, as the fountain and foundation of life and ſalvation to all mankind?

VII. *Concerning the Word's being a fire and a hammer to burn up the chaff, and break the rocks in pieces.*

Queſt. *Is the Word, which is a fire and hammer, the teſtimonies and declarations of the holy ſcriptures without, or the Word nigh in the mouth and heart?*

Anſ. That which I have felt hammering inwardly, that which I have felt burning inwardly, (unquenchably, as the mind has been kept to it) has been the Word of life itſelf, from which the good words and holy teſtimonies proceed. That which does the work in the inward Jew, is the inward miniſtration of the inward covenant, the appearance of God there: he is the conſuming fire; he is the Spirit of judgment and burning, who, by his holy flamings inwardly, burns up the filth of the daughter of Sion. A man may be exerciſed in the letter all his days, and yet witneſs nothing of this inwardly in truth and righteouſneſs; but he whom the Spirit of judgment and burning inwardly comes nigh, and whoſe fleſh is kept in that holy furnace, it will be conſumed there day by day, until it be quite waſted and deſtroyed, and ſo he come to be judged according to the fleſh, and to live to God in the Spirit.

VIII. *Con-*

VIII. *Concerning God's writing his law in the heart.*

Queſt. *How doth God write his law in the heart?*

Anſ. By his Spirit and power working there, whereby he both creates a new heart, and writes the new law, even the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, in the new heart. "The iſles ſhall wait for his law." Whoſe law? The law of the Meſſiah, the law of grace, which gives dominion; the law of the anointing, the law of the new-birth, the law of the holy ſeed. "His ſeed remaineth in him," 1 John iii. 9. In that ſeed is the new nature, and the new law both. What is the law of ſin? What is the law of death? How is it written in the heart? How doth the enemy write it there, but by his corrupt ſpirit and nature? And doth not God, by his holy Spirit and nature, write the new law, the law of life, in the hearts of thoſe that are renewed and made tender to the impreſſions of his holy quickening power? Every motion and drawing whereof is a law to them who are born of the Spirit, and taught of God to eye and walk after the quickening Spirit.

IX. *Concerning the inward light of God's Spirit.*

Queſt. *What is it which the mind is to be turned to, to enlighten it, and to work the darkneſs and corruption out of it?*

Anſ. It is no leſs than the light of God's Spirit; nothing elſe can do it. The day-ſpring muſt ariſe from on high in the heart, or there will be night for ever there. All notions or apprehenſions concerning the light will not do it; it is the ſhining of the light alone inwardly which is able to expel the darkneſs there. It was not for nothing that Chriſt came a light to enlighten men, and directed men to follow him the light, that they might not abide in darkneſs, and that he ſent his apoſtles with this meſſage, that "God is "light,

" light, and in him is no darkneſs at all;" and ſo gave his apoſtles wiſdom, authority, and power to turn men from the darkneſs to the light. And if the darkneſs was within, which they were to be turned from, ſurely the light muſt ſhine within, to diſcover the darkneſs, and to that light muſt they be turned. And in this light the Holy Spirit is received, and dwells there; but out of this light, and the limits thereof, in every heart, dwells the unclean and dark ſpirit, and hath power and rule there; for nothing but the light and ſtrength of God's Spirit is able to break his kingdom and dominion inwardly in the heart.

X. *Concerning the miniſters and miniſtry of the goſpel.*

Queſt. *Who are the miniſters, and what is the miniſtry of the goſpel?*

Anſ. They are the miniſters of the goſpel who have received the Spirit and power wherein the miniſtry of the goſpel ſtands. For Chriſt came in the Spirit and power of the Father, and he ſends his apoſtles and miniſters in the ſame Spirit and power, that they might be able to beget, and reach to that birth which is to be begotten and miniſtered to. It is one thing to be a miniſter of the law, and to miniſter letter; and another thing to be a miniſter of the goſpel, and to miniſter Spirit. The apoſtles were able miniſters of the New Teſtament; not of the letter, but of the Spirit; and ſo are all in a degree, who ſucceed them in any meaſure or proportion of their miniſtry. For the miniſtry of the goſpel is in the light, Spirit, and power of the Moſt High, to turn peoples minds to a proportion of the ſame light, Spirit, and power in themſelves, and ſo to come to the manifeſtation and quickening of the ſame life in themſelves, that ſo they may walk in the ſame light. For the life is the light; and he can never have light, or ſee light, who comes not firſt to feel ſome virtue from the quickening power. Oh! how precious is this miniſtry! Bleſſed be the

Lord for his renewing of it in these our days! And this ministry is not to be confined to an outward order of men, as the ministry of the law was; but whoever hath received the gift, so he is to minister, as the Lord guides, leads, and orders him in the use of that gift which he hath bestowed upon him for that end. And what if he be an herdsman, a fisherman, a tent-maker, or the like? Yet if God hath poured out his Spirit upon him, and openeth his mouth, he hath not only liberty, but more, even authority, from the Lord God Almighty to speak in his name, either for turning men unto Christ, the light and life of men, or for building men up in their holy faith in him, whose Spirit and power was and is the resurrection in the life for evermore.

XI. *Concerning trying of spirits, and searching the heart.*

Queſt. *What is it which searcheth the heart, and infallibly tries spirits?*

Anſ. God's Spirit, God's word nigh in the heart and mouth, separateth and giveth true discerning and judgment there, to all whose ears are circumcised and inclined to it. God's Spirit is the spirit of judgment; and where he is given, the Spirit of judgment is given, and he judgeth in his children by the quickening life and sense he bestoweth on them, which distinguisheth between life and death, between truth and deceit; yea, between the same words, when they come from the dead spirit, and when they are spoken in his living power: Christ gives his Spirit to his sheep, which gives them to know his voice, to know when life speaks, and when words are living, and food for the living; and in what mouth they are dead, and cannot yield living nourishment.

XII. *Con-*

XII. *Concerning things neceſſary to ſalvation.*

Queſt. *Whether all things neceſſary to ſalvation be contained in the ſcriptures?*

Anſ. The ſcriptures give teſtimony concerning the one thing neceſſary to ſalvation; but the thing itſelf, Chriſt himſelf, the ſeed itſelf, is not contained in the ſcriptures, but revealed in the ſhinings of the true light, and ſo received or rejected inwardly in the heart. "Behold I ſtand at the door and knock." Bleſſed are they that hear his voice, and believe him knocking, and open to him, and receive him, who gives eternal life and power to become ſons of God to as many as receive him, and believe in, and give up to, the inward revealings of his redeeming arm and power therein. "To whom is the arm of the Lord re-"vealed?" To them in whom, and to whom, this arm is revealed, Chriſt is revealed; and they in whom, and to whom Chriſt is revealed, know the one thing neceſſary, even him who is life eternal, in whom all other neceſſary things are wrapped up, and by whom they are conveyed to the ſoul, according to its need, by him who is faithful in all his houſe, and takes care of every ſheep which the Father committeth to him.

XIII. *Concerning the true goſpel-church, or ſociety.*

Queſt. *What is the true goſpel-church, or ſociety?*

Anſ. A company of true believers in the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt. A company of true Jews, inward Jews, Jews in Spirit, of the true circumciſion, whom the Father hath ſought out, and made true inward worſhippers; ſuch as are gathered to the name, and gathered together in the name of the Lord Jeſus, to offer up ſpiritual ſacrifices to God through him. A company of living ſtones, who have received life from him, the foundation-ſtone; and meet together to wait upon, and worſhip the Father,

in the light and Spirit which they have received from him. This is the holy church, or living aſſembly of the New Teſtament; bleſſed are they that are of it! For about this church is the wall of ſalvation; and they that are added by God's Spirit and power to this church, and abide in it, ſhall certainly be ſaved.

XIV. *Concerning the way to ſalvation.*

Queſt. *Which is the certain and infallible way to ſalvation?*

Anſ. It is a new and living way; it is ſuch a way as none but the living can walk in. It is an holy way, which none but the cleanſed, the ranſomed, the redeemed of the Lord, can ſet one ſtep in. The way, the life, and the truth are all one; bleſſed are they that find it, and walk in it! In plain and expreſs terms, it is the Lord Jeſus, the light of the Lord Jeſus, the life of the Lord Jeſus, the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus, the truth as it is in him, his wiſdom, his power, he himſelf, the covenant or holy limit between God and the ſoul. He that comes into him, comes into the way; he that abides in him, abides in the way; he that walks in him, walks in the way. He that comes to his light, his life, his Spirit, his truth in the inward parts, comes to him; he that abides therein, abides in him; he that walks therein, walks in him: and he that walks out of the light and leadings of his Spirit, let him walk in what form he will, yet he walks not in him the way.

XV. *Concerning Chriſt's ſaving the ſoul.*

Queſt. *How doth Chriſt ſave the ſoul?*

Anſ. By viſiting inwardly, knocking inwardly, appearing inwardly, cauſing the light of life to ſhine inwardly, and ſo enlightening and quickening inwardly, breaking the ſtrength of the enemy inwardly, and bringing out of the region and ſhadow of darkneſs

neſs inwardly, into the region and path of light. By the light and power of his Spirit he begets a child of light; which child of light he brings out of Egypt, the dark land; out of Sodom, the filthy, unclean land; out of Babylon, the land and city of confuſion, (where the Spirit of the living God, and the holy order of life, and his precious government in the heart, is not ſo much as known) and brings him into the light, where he and his Father dwells. And this child of light is not of the nature of darkneſs, but light in the Lord, and walks in the light, as he is in the light; and by the further ſhining and working of the light and life in him, he preſerves and ſaves him daily more and more.

XVI. *Concerning regeneration, or the new-birth.*

Queſt. *What is regeneration, or the new-birth?*

Anſ. It is an inward change, by the Spirit and power of the living God, into his own nature. It is a being begotten of his Spirit, born of his Spirit; begotten into, and born of the very nature of his Spirit. ("That which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit," John iii.) It is not every change of mind which is the right change; but only that which God, by the very ſame power wherewith he raiſed our Lord Jeſus Chriſt from the grave, makes in the hearts of thoſe whom he viſits; who are ſenſible of, receive, and are ſubject to his inward life, light, and power.

XVII. *Concerning true holineſs.*

Queſt. *What is true holineſs?*

Anſ. That holy nature, and thoſe holy actions, which ariſe from the holy root; all elſe are but imitations of holineſs, not the true holineſs. The tree muſt be made good firſt, and then the fruit will be good alſo. There are many likeneſſes of the true ho-

lineſs up and down in ſeveral profeſſions; but there is no real holineſs to be found, nor righteouſneſs neither, but in the trees of God's planting, in the branches which are by him ingrafted into the true vine and olive-tree, whoſe ſtrength of virtue and holineſs lies in the ſap, which they daily receive from him.

XVIII. *Concerning Chriſt's works outwardly in the days of his fleſh, and inwardly in the day and inward ſhining of the light of his Spirit in the heart.*

Queſt. *Which are greater, the works which Chriſt did outwardly on the bodies of men in the days of his fleſh, or which he doth inwardly in mens minds and ſpirits by the powerful appearance and operation of his Spirit? Becauſe Chriſt ſaid, the works that he did, thoſe that believed on him ſhould do, and greater alſo, becauſe he went to the Father,* John xiv. 12.

Anſ. Doubtleſs to reach to the ſoul, and quicken the ſoul, and raiſe the ſoul out of the grave of death, and cure the blindneſs, deafneſs, hardneſs, and diſeaſes of the ſoul, is greater than the outward, and was ſignified by the outward.

XIX. *Concerning the yoke, or croſs of Chriſt.*

Queſt. *What is the yoke or croſs of Chriſt?*

Anſ. It is inward, as that which is to be crucified is chiefly inward. It is that gift of God, that light of his Spirit, which is contrary to the darkneſs, contrary to all that is corrupt; which wills and wars againſt it; and being received, ſubjected to, and borne patiently, takes away the life of the fleſh, the will and wiſdom of the fleſh, and all the ſubtil reaſonings and devices of the fleſhly part; and ſo that languiſhes and dies, and God's plant is eaſed of it; and the ſoul abiding under this croſs, comes into the true, pure, and perfect

fect liberty, where it hath ſcope unto holineſs, freedom unto righteouſneſs, and is in ſtrait bonds and holy chains from all liberty to the fleſh, and from all unholineſs and unrighteouſneſs of every kind.

XX. *Concerning making our calling and election ſure.*

Queſt. *How may a man make his calling and election ſure?*

Anſ. By making the gift of God ſure to him; by making that ſure to him wherein his calling and election is. For the choice is of the ſeed, the holy ſeed, the inward ſeed, the ſeed of God's Spirit, and of the creature as joined to the ſeed. God would have none to periſh; but would have all come to the knowledge of Chriſt the truth, who is the ſeed, in whom the election ſtands: and his holy advice to men is, whom he begins to call and to lead towards the election, "to make their calling and election ſure." So that the way of making the calling and election ſure is, to make the gift ſure, the ſeed ſure, the leaven ſure, the pearl ſure, which God will never reject, nor any that are found in true union with it, and in the love and obedience of it. Oh! therefore, as God viſits with power, (with his powerful gift) and as thou receiveſt power, dominion, and authority over ſin, (for in this gift is God's dominion and authority revealed) be faithful to the gift, be faithful to the power, give up to the truth in the inward parts, come into it, dwell in it, that thou mayſt feel its virtue and delivering nature from every enſlaving and embondaging thing, and then ſtand faſt in the liberty wherewith Chriſt the Lord (by the life, virtue, and power of his truth) ſets thee free. And ſo here thou wilt read thy calling, and read thy election day by day; and find them ſealed, and ſure to thee, in that truth, in that gift, in that heavenly light, in that holy ſeed, which came from God, and is of him, and which he delights to own, and will never reject.

XXI. *Concerning Prayer.*

Queſt. *What is the true prayer?*

Anſ. The breathings which ariſe from the true birth, from the living ſenſe which God gives to the true birth; theſe are the true prayer. There is a Spirit of prayer and ſupplication given by God to his children to wreſtle and prevail with him by. All prayer that ariſes from, and is given by, that Spirit, is true prayer; all other prayer is not right and true, but at beſt but an imitation of the true. "We know not what to "pray for as we ought; but the Spirit maketh inter- "ceſſion for us with groanings which cannot be ut- "tered." Mark: the very groanings that come from God's Spirit, from his breathing and work upon the heart, are right prayers in God's ſight; but other ſighs and groans are not ſo.

XXII. *Concerning Repentance.*

Queſt. *Which is the true repentance?*

Anſ. That which Chriſt gives, whom God hath exalted to be the Prince and Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins, Acts v. 31. It is not in man's power to repent; his heart is hard and impenitent. It is God's power which melteth, tendereth, and changeth the heart. So that there is a great difference between the ſenſe and ſorrow of man's nature, and the ſenſe and ſorrow which God gives to the heart which he renews and changes. The one is of an earthly, the other of a heavenly nature. The one is like the early dew, or morning cloud, it ſoon paſſeth away; the other is written in the new heart, and abideth. So that in it there is a real ſorrow and mourning over the corrupt nature, and all the dead works of the fleſh, and a turning from them, and meddling no more with them. This is the repentance of the renewed-ones, which is the gift of the Lord Jeſus

Jeſus Chriſt unto them, and is a godly ſorrow for ſin not to be repented of.

XXIII. *Concerning Faith.*

Queſt. *What is the true faith?*

Anſ. It is a belief in the power which ſaves, from a true ſenſe and experience of it in the heart. For the power which ſaves muſt firſt manifeſt itſelf, before it can be believed in; and how doth it manifeſt itſelf, but by ſhining in the heart, which hath been darkened by tranſgreſſion, to open the eye of the underſtanding, which the god of the world hath blinded, and to unſtop the deaf ear, and ſo it begets and creates ſomewhat capable to receive its further manifeſtation. The ſcripture ſpeaks of a new creation in Chriſt. Indeed all true believers are ſo: and they have the ability, the faculty, the power of believing from him who creates them anew. There is that which is called faith in unregenerate men; but that is not the faith I am now ſpeaking of, but that which is the gift of God to his own birth, to his own begotten. "To "you it is given not only to believe," &c. Phil. i. 29. Mark: *It is given to believe.* Oh! this holy gift! this faith of the new-birth is the faith which pleaſeth God, prevaileth with him, purifieth the heart to which it is given, giveth acceſs to God, intereſt in his power and promiſes, and victory over the worldly nature, and over all the ſoul's enemies. Bleſſed be the Lord for beſtowing and increaſing it in the hearts of his children.

XXIV. *Concerning Obedience.*

Queſt. *What is obedience?*

Anſ. The obedience which flows from the true underſtanding of God's will, and from the holy nature which he begets in the heart. It is the obedience which flows from true ſenſe, true underſtanding, and true

true faith. There is no birth can believe aright but one; nor is there any birth can obey aright, but that birth which believes aright. The true believing is from the quickening virtue of God's Spirit (all other faith is but dead faith); and the true obedience is in the newneſs of the Spirit, Rom. vi. 4. and vii. 6. Man may ſtrive to underſtand and obey all his days; but he can do neither, but as he is quickened, taught, and enabled of the Lord. "Teach me, O Lord, the "way of thy ſtatutes," Pſal. cxix. 33. There is a myſtical path of life. The way of wiſdom, the way of holineſs, the holy ſkill of obeying the truth, is hid from all living, from all mankind, but ſuch as are begotten and brought up by him in the holy ſkill and myſtery of ſubjection to the Lord. "Thy people "ſhall be a willing people in the day of thy power." It is the power of God that works the will in the heart, and the ſame power works to do alſo; and none can learn either to will or to do aright, but as they come to be acquainted with that power, joined to that power, and feel that power working in them. And here, in this power, to this new-birth, faith and the holy obedience are as natural, as unbelief and diſobedience are to the birth of the fleſh. It is frequently and abundantly experienced by his holy birth, by the child of his begetting. Bleſſed be the name of the Lord.

XXV. *Concerning Juſtification.*

Queſt. *What is juſtification, or how is a man juſtified in the ſight of God?*

Anſ. By a true ſenſe of, and faith in, that which juſtifies; which is the Spirit, the life, the water, the blood, the virtue, the power of the Lord Jeſus. All theſe are one in nature, and they go together. Man is ſinful naturally, fallen from God, found a tranſgreſſor againſt him. Now he needs juſtification from his ſins, and he needs juſtification in reſpect of what God hath

hath intruſted him with, and requires of him; and in the new-birth, and joining to the Spirit of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, he meets with both. Being quickened by his Holy Spirit, turned from the darkneſs, coming into the light, and walking in the light; there his ſins are done away, blotted out, as if they had never been, for his name's ſake; and there he receiveth a new ability, a new heart, a new Spirit, yea, the Spirit of the living God, to quicken him, and work in him; and whatever he doth in this Spirit (or rather what God doth by him, in and through this Spirit) is juſtified, owned, and accepted. God finds no fault in any of the fruits of his own Spirit, (in any of the children of men) but only in the fruits of the fleſh. And if, for want of watchfulneſs, the enemy ſhould prevail, and draw into a ſnare; yet upon turning to the light of God's Holy Spirit, which diſcovers and reproves for it, in the holy light the water flows, the blood is ſprinkled, the conſcience is cleanſed, and ſo becomes clean even in God's ſight. Oh! bleſſed is he who is not deceived with dead notions of juſtification, but feels the juſtification which comes from God, and is accompanied with a living ſenſe, and with the teſtimony of his Holy Spirit.

XXVI. *Concerning good Works.*

Queſt. *What are good works?*

Anſ. The works that flow from God's good Spirit, the works that are wrought in God, they are good works. The works of the new-birth, of the new-creature, are good works; whereas all the works of the fleſh are bad, though never ſo finely painted. All its thoughts, imaginations, reaſonings, willings, runnings, hunting to find out God and heavenly things, with all its ſacrifices, are corrupt and evil, having of the bad leaven, of the bad nature in them. Make the tree good, or its fruit can never be good; ſo that they are only the good works that flow from the good tree,

tree, from the good root. And here all the works of the flesh, though never so glorious and taking in man's eye, are shut out by God's measure, by God's line and plummet of righteousness and true judgment; and every work of God's Spirit, the meanest work of faith, the least labour of true love, the least shining of life in the heart, and the giving up thereto, is owned by God as coming from him, and wrought in him, who worketh both to will and to do, of his own good pleasure. He that is gathered to the light which God hath enlightened him with, hath received the light, dwelleth in the light, and walketh in the light; the Spirit of the living God is near him, and dwelleth with him, and worketh in him; and he bringeth his deeds to the light, where it is manifest that they are wrought in God. But he that is out of the inward light of God's Holy Spirit, his works are not wrought in God, and so can but make a fair shew in the flesh, (to the fleshly eye) but are not good in God's sight. The erring man's way and works are often right in his own eyes; ah! but blessed is he whose way and works are good and right in the eye of the Lord, in the judgment of his searching unerring light and Spirit.

XXVII. *Concerning Love.*

Quest. *Which is the true love?*

Ans. The love which ariseth from the nature which God begets, and from this circumcising the heart from the other nature. Love is the beautiful thing. What can be higher expressed concerning God himself, than to say he is love? Love is greatly commended and admired, and there are many pretenders to it; but none have the true love, but only those that are born of God, and circumcised by him. "The Lord "thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart "of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all "thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest "live,"

" live," Deut. xxx. 6. Mark: the true love ariſeth from the true circumciſion; and the more a man comes to have his heart circumciſed from the fleſhly nature, and to grow up in the pure and heavenly nature, the more he loves. God is love; and the nigher any one comes to him, and the more he partakes of him, the more he becomes love in the Lord, and the more he is taught of God to love the Lord his God, and his brethren in the Spirit, and all mankind who are of his blood (for of one blood God made all mankind) according to the fleſh, or according to a natural conſideration.

XXVIII. *Concerning Meekneſs and Patience.*

Queſt. *What is the true meekneſs and patience?*

Anſ. The meekneſs and patience which ariſeth from the Lamb's nature. Deceit will put on an appearance of love, and deceit will put on alſo an appearance of meekneſs and patience; but it cannot put on the true love, the true meekneſs and patience: that is only learned of the Lamb, and received of him by receiving of his Spirit and nature from him. And oh! how precious is this! how ſweet is it felt in the heart! To feel a meek, a quiet, a patient ſpirit in the midſt of all trials, all troubles, all fears, all doubts, all temptations of every kind. Indeed this is of much price in the ſight of the Lord, and alſo in the eye of him who hath received it from the Lord, and enjoyeth it in him, and poſſeſſeth his ſoul in him.

XXIX. *Concerning the knowledge of the new covenant.*

Queſt. *What is the knowledge of the new covenant?*

Anſ. The knowledge which is given by God to the new-birth: for to it the new covenant belongs, and the knowledge thereof. The truly begotten of God, the

the true disciples of Christ, to them it is given to know the kingdom of God; but to others it is not given. The Jew outward, the first birth, the birth after the flesh, for them the priest's lips were to preserve knowledge, and they were to seek the law at his mouth; and to them God sent prophets to speak to them, and taught them by his prophets: but concerning the inward Jews, the children of the new covenant, the children of the Jerusalem which is above, concerning her seed it was prophesied, that they all should be taught of the Lord; they all should hear and know the voice of the Shepherd himself; they should all be gathered to the Shepherd and Bishop of the soul, and taught by him. So that in this new, holy, living covenant, God himself is the Shepherd, God himself is the Teacher, not only of the greatest, but of the very least, Heb. viii. For he teacheth them all to know the Lord, and to know his Son, and to come to his Son, and to love him their Father, and one another. So that he that is taught of God, he hath the true knowledge, the living knowledge, the substantial knowledge, the knowledge of the thing itself, of the life eternal itself. All that are not thus taught (but learn only from a literal description and relation of things) have not the knowledge of the new covenant, the knowledge of the thing itself; but only an outward knowledge, such as the first birth may catch at, lay hold on, and comprehend.

XXX. *Concerning the fear of the new covenant.*

Quest. *What is the fear of the new covenant?*

Ans. It is the fear which God puts in the hearts of his children; which fear cleanseth their hearts, and keepeth them from departing from their God. There is a great deal of difference between the fear which may be learned from precepts from without, and the fear which God puts in the hearts of his children from a root of life within; which fear is of an heavenly nature,

nature, and is the free gift of God to his own heavenly birth, and none elſe; which no man can poſſibly attain by any thoughts or reaſonings of his own, but only by the ſpringings of life from God. And he that would have this fear, muſt know the place of wiſdom, and wait there for it; and when he hath it, this fear will ſoon begin to make him wiſe towards ſalvation, and teach him to depart from evil, which is the cauſe of deſtruction, Job xxviii. 28.

XXXI. *Concerning Hope.*

Queſt. *What is the true hope?*

Anſ. The ſtay of the mind upon the Lord, the ſtay of the heavenly birth upon its Father: for we muſt diſtinguiſh between hope and hope. There is the hope of the hypocrite, or falſe birth, which ſhall periſh; and the hope of the true birth, which will never fail it, nor make it aſhamed; becauſe that birth is taught of God to hope aright. Now in hope, there is both the ground of it, and the hope itſelf. The ground of the hope is God's love, God's truth, God's faithfulneſs, God's grace, his ſeed, his Chriſt felt within; being of him, united to him, in him, he in me: here is the ground of my aſſurance of the everlaſting glory and inheritance, which is ſure to the ſeed, and to all that are of and in the ſeed. So knowing Chriſt within me, feeling Chriſt within me, living in him, and he in me, I have an anchor ſure and ſtedfaſt within the veil, which no ſtorms, no tempeſts, no trials, no temptations, preſent or to come, have power over me. And then there is the hope, or hoping itſelf; that is, the ſtaying of the mind upon the Lord, the leaning upon the Lord, the retiring beyond all thoughts, or reaſonings, or lookings out, to the inward life; to feel ſomewhat ſpring from it, for the ſoul to hope or truſt in, beyond all outward appearance. And this hope never deceives nor makes aſhamed thoſe who are taught of God thus to ſtay their

their minds upon him. Nay, though the ſtate be darkneſs, and no light ſeen; yet beneath the darkneſs there is ſomewhat to ſtay the mind of the child and ſervant of the Lord till he appear, and cauſe light to break out of obſcurity; for light is ſown for the righteous, and joy for the upright, even in their darkeſt, ſaddeſt, and moſt diſtreſſed conditions; in all which the Lord is near them, and there is ſtill ground for them to hope in him.

XXXII. *Concerning Peace.*

Queſt. *Which is the true peace?*

Anſ. The peace which God ſpeaks to the ſoul; the peace which Chriſt gives to his own diſciples. The way of truth, the way of life leads to peace; and the peace which is found therein is of God's giving, and is the true peace. Firſt, God breathes upon the heart, begets a right birth, a true child; then he leads him into the holy way, the righteous way; from that which loads and burdens, to that wherein is the eaſe and reſt. Thus in the believing and following him there is joy and peace. This is experienced by all the true travellers, and by none elſe. No man, with all his wiſdom, knowledge, and underſtanding, can ſo much as gueſs at what this peace is. The peace of God, the peace which he ſpeaks to his children, the nature of it, the ſweetneſs of it, the heavenlineſs of it, paſſeth man's underſtanding; but he who is born from above, who hath a new and heavenly underſtanding, he knoweth the nature, excellency, and precioufneſs of it; and would not for all this world, for any fear, or danger, or expectation of any thing from without, hazard the breaking off this precious peace and reſt of his ſoul in his God.

XXXIII. *Con-*

XXXIII. *Concerning Joy.*

Queſt. *Which is the true joy?*

Anſ. The joy which flows from God's preſence, and the work of his power in the heart, and the aſſured expectation which he gives of the full inheritance and glory of life everlaſting. When the bridegroom is preſent, when the ſoul is gathered home to him, married to him, in union with him, in the holy living fellowſhip; when he appears againſt the enemies of the ſoul, riſing up againſt them, breaking, ſcattering them, and giving of his good things, filling with life, filling with love, filling with virtue, feaſting the ſoul in the preſence of the Father; oh! what ſweet joy! oh! what fulneſs of joy is there then in the heart! "In thy preſence is fulneſs of joy, and at thy right-"hand are pleaſures for evermore," ſaid the pſalmiſt, Pſ. xvi. 11. Surely he had had a taſte of the thing, he had been in God's preſence, and that made him cry out, "Caſt me not away from thy preſence," Pſal. li. 11.; and he had drank of the river of God's pleaſure, which is at his right-hand, which made him ſpeak ſo ſenſibly of it, Pſal. xxxvi. 8. and xlvi. 4. Chriſt ſaid to his diſciples, that becauſe of his going away they ſhould have ſorrow; but he would ſee them again, and their heart ſhould rejoice, and their joy no man ſhould take from them, John xvi. 22. How or when was this fulfilled? What were they ſorry for? Was it not the loſs of his outward preſence, which had been ſo ſweet and comfortable to them? How would he come to them again? Was it not by the Comforter? Was it not by his inward and ſpiritual preſence? So that he that was with them ſhould be in them? Before they knew Chriſt with them; now they ſhould know Chriſt in them; the Father in them, and they in him; Immanuel, the goſpel-ſtate, God with us, dwelling with us, tabernacling in us, living in us, walking in us, and we living and walking in him. When the apoſtles came to this ſtate, then they came

to witneſs the joy in the Holy Ghoſt, even the joy unſpeakable, and full of glory. And hence it is that the goſpel ſtate is a ſtate of joy and rejoicing in the Lord, even in his glorious living preſence, and in the glory of his power. For in the goſpel ſtate the true light ſhines inwardly in the heart, the life is manifeſted; and being manifeſted, they that come into the manifeſtation of it, come into the holy union, and into the holy fellowſhip with the Father and Son, where the joy is, and where the joy is full; where the power is revealed which does away that which is contrary to the holy fellowſhip, and hinders the holy joy and rejoicing in the Lord. See 1 John i. 3, 4.

XXXIV. *Concerning Poverty of Spirit and Humility.*

Queſt. *Which is the right poverty of ſpirit, and the true humility?*

Anſ. That poverty and humility of ſpirit which ſpringeth from the ſame root from which the faith, the love, the peace, the joy, and the other heavenly things ariſe; and is of the ſame nature. There is a voluntary humility, and a voluntary poverty, even of ſpirit, which man caſts himſelf into, and forms in himſelf, by his own workings and reaſonings. This is not the true, but the falſe image, or counterfeit of the true; but then there is a poverty which ariſeth from God's emptying the creature, from God's ſtripping the creature; and an humility which ariſeth from a new heart and nature. This is of the right kind, and is laſting, and abides in the midſt of the riches and glory of the kingdom. For as Chriſt was poor in ſpirit before his Father, and lowly in heart in the midſt of all the fulneſs which he received from him; ſo it is with thoſe who are of the ſame birth and nature with Chriſt. They are filled with humility, and clothed with humility, in the midſt of all the graces and heavenly riches which God fills them and adorns them with. Keep in the faith, keep in the truth, keep in the light,

light, keep in the power; it excludes boaſting in or after the fleſh, and keeps the mind in that humility and poverty of ſpirit which God hath brought, and daily further and further brings it into; and ſo the humility and poverty remains (poor in ſpirit for ever, humble in ſpirit for ever, nothing before the Lord for ever) even as that remains which brought into that frame, and keeps in that frame for ever. And ſo the Lord of life is only exalted, and the creature kept abaſed before him, and low for ever; and is nothing but as the Lord pleaſeth to fill, and make it to be what it is. So what I am, I am by God's love, by his grace, by his mercy, by his goodneſs, by his power, by his wiſdom, by his righteouſneſs, by his holineſs, which he of his own good pleaſure communicateth, and cauſeth to ſpring in me, and filleth and clotheth me with, as ſeemeth good in his ſight.

THE

CONCLUSION.

THERE is mention made in the book of the Revelations, in the epiſtles from Chriſt to the ſeven churches of Aſia, of a tree of life, which is in the midſt of the paradiſe of God (the fruit whereof is good for food, and the leaves thereof for the healing of the nations); and of hidden manna, and a white ſtone, and in the ſtone a new name written, which none knoweth but he that receiveth it; and of a morning-ſtar to be given, and power over the nations, to rule their ſpirit, even as Chriſt hath received of his Father; and of being clothed in white, and his name confeſſed before the Father (This is the ſheep

of my fold, the child of my Father's begetting, who is named by me among the living, I know him by his name, John x. 3.); as alſo of his being a pillar in the temple of God, and of going no more out, but bearing the name of God, and the name of the city of God, the new Jeruſalem (which cometh down from God out of heaven); and of Chriſt's new name, (oh! what is that!) and of ſitting with Chriſt in his throne.

This is the generation of ſpiritual kings, who have a ſpiritual kingdom, and a ſpiritual throne, even Chriſt's kingdom, and Chriſt's throne, the royal prieſthood of God. Oh! precious things! Oh! rich glory! Surely eye hath not ſeen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of men to conceive what theſe things are.

Now he that would witneſs theſe things; he that would know, experience, and enjoy theſe things, muſt mind that ſeed in which they are wrapped up, as in a ſeed, and out of which they ſpring, and ſhoot forth. The kingdom is in the ſeed, the throne in the ſeed, the power in the ſeed. He that is united to the ſeed, and abideth in the ſeed, receiveth power from the ſeed, and overcometh, he ſhall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he ſhall be my ſon, Rev. xxi. 7. But he that will be ſo, muſt not be fearful or unbelieving of overcoming ſin, or his ſoul's enemies; but muſt depend upon the almighty, and all-ſufficient power of God, which will give him victory over ſin, and keep him that he touch no unclean thing; that he may be holy, as the Lord his God is holy; and righteous, even as the Lord his God is righteous. Indeed it becometh the heavenly children to partake of the divine life, of the heavenly nature of their Father, and be like him. And he that partaketh of his nature, of his holineſs, Heb. xii. 10. is holy, as he is holy: and he that from the holy root of purity and righteouſneſs, doth righteouſneſs; is righteous, even as he is righteous, 1 John iii. 7. So it is written without, and ſo it is teſtified within, by him that is born of God in whom the

the ſeed remaineth, which overcometh the wicked one, bruiſeth him and keepeth him under: and the juſt live by the faith which giveth victory over him.

Some EXPERIENCES added.

I. *Concerning the ſeed of the kingdom.*

CONCERNING the ſeed of the kingdom, this I have experienced; that it conſiſts not in words or notions of the mind, but is an inward thing, an inward ſpiritual ſubſtance in the heart, as real inwardly in its kind, as other ſeeds are outwardly in their kind: and that being received by faith, and taking root in man, (his heart, his earth, being ploughed up and prepared for it) it groweth up inwardly, and bringeth forth fruit inwardly, as truly and really as any outward ſeed doth outwardly. This ſeed is known by its contrariety and enmity againſt the ſeed of the ſerpent; againſt all the ſeeds of evil in the hearts of men; it diſcovering them, turning the mind from them, and warring againſt them, and bruiſing and overcoming them in all that receive it, and let in its holy nature; which, as an holy leaven or ſalt, worketh out that which is unholy and unrighteous, dark and dead, and ſeaſoneth with light, with life, with grace, with the holineſs and righteouſneſs of truth.

II. *Concerning the ſoul's food.*

The ſoul's food is that which nouriſheth it, which is the ſame with that which giveth it life. Every word proceeding out of the mouth of God, every mo-

tion, every quickening, every operation of his Spirit is living, and nouriſheth the ſoul with life, which receiveth it and feedeth on it. The ſpiritual manna, the ſpiritual water, from the holy well or fountain, the milk of the word, the fleſh and blood of the Son of the living God, his words, which are ſpirit and life, nouriſh up the living birth unto life everlaſting. How comes man to live at firſt; but by hearing the voice of him that giveth life? And how comes man to live afterwards, and to increaſe in life, but by hearing the ſame voice ſtill? "Incline your ear, and come unto "me: hear, and your ſoul ſhall live," &c. Iſa. lv. 3. This I have alſo experienced to give me life, to nouriſh up and ſtrengthen me in life; even freſh life communicated from the living Fountain; and ſo my life is not in myſelf, not in any thing I can comprehend concerning Chriſt; but in being joined to him, in being ingrafted into him the holy root, into him the true olive-tree, into his Spirit: and ſo by the ſap that ſprings up into me from him, my life is maintained and increaſed in me daily. Glory to his name for ever.

III. *Concerning God's power.*

Concerning God's power, this I have experienced; that that is it which doth the work in the ſoul. It begets to God, it brings out of the land of darkneſs, it leads through all entanglements, and preſerves in the midſt of them all. It breaks down the old building of ſin and iniquity, (both inwardly and outwardly, both in heart, and alſo in life and converſation) and raiſeth the new and holy building. It makes willing, it makes obedient, it gives to believe, it gives to ſuffer. Oh! bleſſed be the Lord for the day of his power, which is inwardly broken forth! Oh! what would the poor child do (the poor lambs in the midſt of the wolves, inwardly and outwardly) were it not for the Father's hand, the Father's arm, the Father's power,

power, which is ſtill with them, and compaſſeth them about! Oh! bleſſed are they that know the miniſtration of the life inwardly, the power of life inwardly! For in life, in the ſeed of life, is the holy power; which is manifeſt, appears and works, as it gains ground on the creature, to put forth and exerciſe in it the virtue and ſtrength which it daily receiveth from its Father.

IV. *Concerning Temptations.*

Concerning temptations, this I have experienced; that the ſtrength and hurt of them, as to the ſoul, lies in the ſoul's looking at them. For the ſtrength of God is revealed in his children againſt the tempter; which being patiently waited for, and truſted in, will never fail them. The leaſt babe, the Lord would not have let in temptation and ſin: but watch to that, and keep joined to that, which will preſerve out of temptation, and out of ſin. God is faithful, who hath care of all his, and whoſe promiſe is to all his: and as he would have none ſin; ſo none that diligently wait, ſhall want his power to ſtand by them, to preſerve out of ſin. "Look unto me, and be ſaved, all ye ends "of the earth." It is univerſally true. Look unto me, truſt in me; look not at yourſelves, truſt not in yourſelves; look not at the enemy, fear not the enemy; I will ſave you from every ſnare, every temptation, as your eye is ſtedfaſt upon me. What if the enemy come in like a flood? If the Spirit of the Lord lift up a ſtandard againſt him, can he prevail? Wha though he caſt fiery darts? What though he beſet round about? Will not the ſhield of faith quench them all? Will not the whole armour of God defend and keep ſafe from them all? If the enemy be reſiſted lawfully, (that is, in true faith in that power which is engaged for the ſoul againſt him) doth not the power of the Lord ariſe and ſcatter him, and ſtrengthen and eſtabliſh the ſoul in the grace, and in the truth? Oh!

the holy myſtery of the heavenly warfare, and of the working of the pure power againſt the enemy; which overcomes all his impurities, and keeps clean from them! Look not at the enemy; let not in the reaſonings of the mind; keep in the patience, keep in the pure fear, in the holy living ſenſe; be only what thou art in the ſeed, in the new birth, in the life which God hath begotten in thee; then art thou ſafe, then art thou in the name of the Lord, which is the ſtrong tower. The enemy indeed may make a noiſe about thee with his luſts, with his temptations, with his floods, with his ſtorms, with his fiery darts: but he cannot enter thy habitation. The ſpirit of darkneſs, the prince of darkneſs, is ſhut out of the land of the living. Abide thou there: dwell in the light, and walk in the light, as God is in the light, and he ſhall never have power over thee.

V. *Concerning Prayer.*

I have experienced prayer to be the breathing of that birth which God begets, to the Father of life which begat it; who by his Spirit makes known to it its condition and wants, and gives a ſuitable ſenſe of heart, and cries to it. For as it is not in man to beget himſelf to God; no more can he pray to God in his own will or time, but as God pours out the Spirit of prayer and ſupplication upon him, and by his Spirit teacheth and helpeth him to pray as he ought. "Be-"cauſe ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit "of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." I have had a ſenſe of the natural man, and of the ſpiritual man; and of the cries and prayers of each: and this I have been taught and learned of God, that the goſpel-prayer is the prayer of that birth which is begotten by the Spirit and power of the goſpel; and which prays in the Spirit, and in the ſpringing of the holy life and power; whereby it rightly wreſtles, and prevails with God, obtaining the mercies and bleſſings which

which it wreſtles with him for. For to this child there is acceſs from God in the faith, through that holy Spirit of life which makes way for it, to obtain grace and mercy in the time of need. And through this Spirit it prays to God, and prevails with him on the behalf of others alſo. For the prayers of the righteous avail much, as it is written.

VI. *Concerning Juſtification and Sanctification, ſome things which it hath pleaſed the Lord, in his tender mercy, to give me to experience.*

Firſt, That it is the ſame Chriſt, the ſame Spirit, the ſame life, the ſame wiſdom, the ſame power, the ſame goodneſs, love, and mercy, the ſame water, the ſame blood, which both juſtifies and ſanctifies.

Secondly, That juſtification and ſanctification go hand in hand together. There is none juſtified, but he that is in meaſure ſanctified: and there is none ſanctified, but he that is in ſome meaſure juſtified. For God juſtifieth by a rule (by the new covenant, and according to the law thereof); and men receive and partake of juſtification, according as they are brought into, and keep within, the compaſs of that rule. For God acted of old toward, and juſtified, the children of the old covenant according to the law thereof; and the children of the new covenant are juſtified, and partake of juſtification, according to the law thereof.

Thirdly, That juſtification and ſanctification are both of and through the grace It is ſo in the beginning, and it is ſo all along. "By grace ye are ſaved," ſaith the apoſtle. The whole work of ſalvation is begun and carried on through grace. It is through that, God viſits and reaches to the ſoul, with his quickening virtue and power. He regenerates alſo thereby. Through that he juſtifies; through that he ſanctifies, &c. So that as the work goes on, grace, grace, is to be cried to him that does the work, from his very laying

laying the foundation, and faſtening the ſoul thereupon, to his very laying on of the top ſtone.

Fourthly, Though juſtification and ſanctification be of God's grace and mercy in Chriſt; yet this doth not exclude faith: but they are alſo through faith, and not without it. God doth not juſtify man in the unbelieving ſtate, in the dead ſtate, in his abiding there; but in the coming out of it, in the repenting and turning from the dead works to the living God, and in believing in him: and ſo he alſo ſanctifies him.

Fifthly, Faith and obedience are of the ſame nature, and always go together. So that wherever there is faith, there is obedience likewiſe; and wherever there is obedience, there is faith. Obedience flows from faith, and cannot be without it; for the very nature and virtue of faith is in it. And faith is obedience. For this is the command of God, that the ſoul believe on him (and in his appearances) whom he hath ſent to ſave; and this believing is obedience unto him that commands it. And this faith, and this obedience, is holy and juſt in God's ſight; and through it (but not without it) the ſoul is both juſtified and ſanctified.

Sixthly, That the works of faith, the works of the new life, are not the works of the law, the works of the old covenant; nor are excluded juſtification, as the works of the old covenant are. For I have found the Lord, who hath condemned and excluded all my doings, which ever I have been able to do of myſelf, ſtill juſtify and accept what his Spirit and holy power hath done in me. They are not of the ſame nature in themſelves; nor are they ſo accounted of in the eye of the Lord. For the Lord diſtinguiſheth between root and root: and what ſpringeth from the holy root, he juſtifieth as holy; and what ariſeth from the unholy root, he condemneth as unholy.

Seventhly, That by the law of faith all boaſting is excluded, in the whole work both of juſtification and ſanctification. What is the law of faith? Is not this its law, to fetch all from the Son, to do all in the Son?

Son? to quit ſelf, and its own ability, and to perform all in the newneſs of the Spirit, in the ability which is of God, given and continued, in and through his grace and mercy, to the ſoul in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt; all the veins of life, all the ſtreams of the new covenant run here. Here is no boaſting of the creature; here can be no boaſting: for all its ability and ſtrength is ſhut out; and that which is given of God to it, is all and doth all. Yet every Jew here hath praiſe of God. His faith is commended, his love is commended, his faithfulneſs is commended, his zeal for the Lord, his obedience to the Lord, his patience in ſuffering, is commended, &c. But the praiſe and honour of all redounds not to his fleſh, but to the Spirit and grace of God in him. So that here fleſh is laid low, and kept in the duſt for ever, and God alone exalted in this day of his pure power in the heart. He that truly believeth, entereth into reſt. How into reſt? From what doth he reſt? Why, from his own works, from the works of the fleſh; yea, from the works of the old covenant; from the works that ariſe from his own ability, from the works wherein he can never be juſtified with the goſpel-juſtification. But doth he ceaſe from the works of faith? Doth he ceaſe from the labour of love? Doth he ceaſe from obedience to any thing that God requires? Nay: then ſurely he rather beginneth to work and labour in the vineyard; and his labour is not in vain in the Lord.

VII. *Concerning Faith.*

Several things I have experienced, both concerning the nature, virtue, and operations of it; ſome whereof (as I feel them ſpring up livingly in my heart) I may mention at this time.

Firſt, This I have often experienced; that it is an hard thing truly and rightly to believe. It is an eaſy matter to believe notions concerning God, and concerning Chriſt: but to believe in God, to believe in Chriſt,

Chriſt, to believe in him that raiſed up Jeſus, to believe in the light, life, and power, which flows from Jeſus; this indeed is hard, by reaſon of the great darkneſs and ignorance which man is fallen into through tranſgreſſion.

Secondly, I have experienced this alſo; that faith is God's gift, and that it flows from the power of his life. There is firſt a quickening, firſt a touching of the heart, by the holy pure power of the Lord; and when a man is touched and quickened, then in and by and through that virtue which flows into him, he can believe in that which toucheth and quickeneth him.

Thirdly, That faith never ſtands in a man's own power, but always in the virtue and power of the life of the Son. So that he that will believe aright, muſt wait to feel the life of the Son revealed in him, and faith flowing therefrom. For the true belief ſprings from the life of the holy root; and from the flowing up and ſpringing up of that life, faith receives its nouriſhment and daily virtue.

Fourthly, I have obſerved this in my travels; that the earthly wiſdom, and notions therefrom got into the mind, and held in the mind out of the ſenſe of life, are a great let to faith. For theſe ſtrengthen and nouriſh that in man, which is to be weakened and die; that life, and the birth of life, may be all in the heart. Man is to die; man is to be ceaſed from; his underſtanding, his wiſdom, is to be brought to nought. But after it hath had a ſtroke and wound from God's Holy Spirit and power, (even the very wound which tends to death) yet it will be getting life again, (getting its deadly wound healed) and nouriſhing its life by thoſe very notions, which came from that life and power, which in meaſure ſlew it. And thus the Jew outward hath his life in the outwardneſs of knowledge, in the outwardneſs of the law, in the letter which killeth: for the relation and outward knowledge of things killeth and deadeneth more and more, unleſs man come into the inward life and virtue, and daily feel them quickened there. "If ye

"live

" live in the Spirit, walk in the Spirit," ſaid the apoſtle. A man cannot live in an outwardneſs of knowledge concerning the Spirit and power of the endleſs life; but he that would truly live, muſt live in the Spirit itſelf; and he that would rightly walk on in his way, muſt walk in that Spirit wherein he received life, and wherein he that abideth lives before the Lord.

Fifthly, This I have alſo obſerved; that all notional faith, wherein is not the living virtue, (as concerning Chriſt, his ſufferings, death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, interceſſion; and concerning juſtification by him, &c.) the enemy will let the ſoul alone with, and let him enjoy peace in; but his war is deſperately againſt the true faith, againſt faith in the true power, againſt faith in the light of life. Oh! how many ſore and ſharp aſſaults doth he make againſt the faith which receives its virtue from God, and cauſeth the ſoul to live to God! And how ſore is it with the ſoul, when faith is weak, and the enemy comes on againſt it with the ſtrength of his aſſaults and temptations. " Lord in- " creaſe our faith," ſaid the ſenſible diſciples.

Sixthly, It is a precious thing to feel faith quickened by God, and helped by God, againſt the enemy. For then the enemy cannot prevail againſt the ſoul; but the ſoul, through the virtue and power of life, prevails over the enemy in the faith. And this is the great work of a Chriſtian, not only to wreſtle and fight, but to learn ſo to wreſtle, and ſo to fight, as to overcome.

Seventhly, That in the pure fear (not that which is taught by the precepts of men, but which God puts into the heart) faith hath its ſtrength, and exerciſeth its ſtrength. Oh! who knows the preciouſneſs of this fear! The power of faith, the power of life, the power of ſalvation, and everlaſting preſervation is revealed in it. Therefore, ſaith the Lord, when he ſpeaketh of providing for his children in the new covenant, that they ſhall abide with him for ever, and not depart any more from him, as the children of the old

old covenant did; "I will put my fear in their hearts, "and they shall not depart from me." And when the angel preached the everlasting gospel, how did he preach it? "Fear God, and give glory to him, for "the hour of his judgments is come," &c. Rev. xiv. When the pure fear is felt, when that which is contrary to God is judged; then the gospel is known, and the work thereof experienced in the heart. And how easy is it, when the pure fear is felt, to distrust and deny one's self, and trust in the Lord! Oh! how weak are the reasonings and imaginations then, and how strong is the power which scatters them, and lifts up the head over them!

Now it concerns every one deeply to consider, of what nature his faith is, and what virtue is in it, and what it can do in and through the power of the Lord for him; how it fetcheth in the true living nourishment every day, how it delivers the soul, and gives it victory over that which faith was appointed to deliver from. For he who through the faith overcometh that which is contrary to God, shall inherit; and he that fights the good fight of faith, shall overcome: but he that overcomes not his enemies, which stand in his way, shall be sure to be hindered by them from attaining to his journey's end.

VIII. *Concerning Obedience, some experiences also.*

First, True obedience, gospel-obedience, flows from life, flows from the living faith. If I could obey in all things that God requires of me, yet that would not satisfy me, unless I felt my obedience flow from the birth of his life in me. "My Father doth all in me," saith Christ. This was Christ's comfort. And to feel Christ do all in the soul, is the comfort of every one that truly believes in him.

Secondly, True obedience, gospel obedience, is natural to the birth which is born of God. It is unnatural to the flesh, to man's wisdom, to deny himself, and

and take up the croſs; but it is natural to the birth which is born of God's Spirit. "That which is born "of the Spirit, is Spirit;" and it is natural to it to be converſant in, and exerciſed about, that which is ſpiritual.

Thirdly, That honouring and pleaſing, and anſwering the will of the Lord, is the proper aim of the truly obedient. Oh! how do they delight to do the will of God! "I have meat," ſaith Chriſt, "that ye know "not of." To do the will was his meat and drink: and it is meat and drink to all that are of his nature and Spirit. If I ſhould never have any other reward, but the pleaſure of obedience; yet I could not but ſay and teſtify, that in anſwering the law of the pure life, in keeping the holy ſtatutes and commandments of God's Spirit, there is great reward. But yet there is a crown alſo, and a reaping after this life of every thing that is ſown to the Spirit: and the crown is weighty and everlaſtingly glorious.

Fourthly, Goſpel obedience is exceeding neceſſary in and to the goſpel ſtate. Mark! *The Lamb is the leader:* and can any be ſaved by him, but they that follow him? When Chriſt calls out of the world, muſt not the ſoul come to him, who is the Shepherd? And muſt not the ſheep daily learn to know his voice, and follow him; even till they come to be acquainted with every moving, drawing, and leading of his Spirit; and ſo come to follow the Lamb whitherſoever he goes? Mark! what a weight Chriſt layeth upon doing. "If ye know theſe things, happy are ye if "ye do them." Why then the diſciple cannot come to happineſs, but in the doing, in the obeying of the will of Chriſt, his Lord and Maſter. And "he "that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them, "I will liken him to a wiſe man, that built his houſe "upon a rock." But the believer, without doing the will, is the fooliſh builder, whoſe building will not ſtand. Again, ſaith Chriſt, "As the Father hath "loved me, ſo have I loved you; continue ye in my "love. If ye keep my commandments, ye ſhall "abide

" abide in my love; even as I have kept my Father's " commandments, and abide in his love." The diſciples, whom he moſt dearly loved, muſt keep his commandments, if they will continue in his love. And his apoſtles taught the ſame, even the working out of the ſalvation, and the purifying of the heart, through the obedience of the truth. For mark! There is a covenant of life, a way of life: and how can life be reaped, how can the work of life go on, but in ſubjection and obedience thereto?

Oh! bleſſed is he, who meets with the power of life, which enables to obey; and who is obedient and ſubject to that power. For he that truly believes in Chriſt, is turned by him to his light, and to the power of his Father; and the peace, growth, joy, bleſſedneſs, &c. is witneſſed in ſubjection thereto.

IX. *Concerning the croſs of Chriſt.*

This I have experienced concerning the croſs of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt; that it is an inward and ſpiritual thing, producing inward and ſpiritual effects in the mind; and that this is it, even that which ſlays the enmity in the mind, and crucifies to the world, and the affections thereof. " God forbid," ſaid the apoſtle, " that I ſhould glory, ſave in the croſs of our " Lord Jeſus Chriſt, whereby the world is crucified " unto me, and I unto the world." Now mark; That which is contrary to the world, and crucifies to the world, that is the croſs. The croſs hath this power, and nothing elſe; and ſo there is nothing elſe to glory in. " The fleſh luſteth againſt the Spirit, and the " Spirit againſt the fleſh; and theſe are contrary one " to the other." Mind, here is the croſs: the Spirit which is contrary to the fleſh, which mortifies the fleſh, through the obedience whereof the fleſh is crucified. " If ye, through the Spirit, mortify the deeds " of the body, ye ſhall live." Whatſoever is of and in the Spirit, is contrary to the fleſh. The light of the

the Spirit is contrary to the darkneſs of the fleſh. The holineſs of the Spirit is contrary to the unholineſs of the corrupt heart. The life of the Spirit is contrary to the life (or rather death) that is in ſin. The power of the Spirit is contrary to the power that is in Satan, and his kingdom. The wiſdom of God is contrary, and a fooliſh thing, to the wiſdom of man. Yea, the new creature, which ſprings from God's Holy Spirit, is contrary and death to the old. Now he that comes hither, out of his own wiſdom, out of his own will, out of his own thoughts, out of his own reaſonings; and comes to a diſcerning of God's Spirit, and to the feeling of his begetting of life in his heart, and his ſtirrings and movings in the life which he hath begotten; and waits here, and receives counſel here; he is taught to deny himſelf, and to join to and take up that, by which Chriſt daily croſſeth and ſubdueth in him that which is contrary to God.

And here is the fight of faith, and the good travel under the croſs, whereby the holy journey is gone, and the enemies (which riſe up to oppoſe in the way) vanquiſhed and overcome. For here is the power revealed; the preſerving power, the leading power, the conquering power of him who rideth on conquering and to conquer his ſpiritual enemies in the hearts of his children, who know his voice, and are ſubject to him; who daily denying themſelves, and taking up his croſs, follow him. Woe is to them that are at eaſe in Sion, under any thing that is contrary to God; but bleſſings are upon them whoſe dwelling is under the croſs, and who know no eaſe but what it allows. It will make truth, life, holineſs, righteouſneſs, faith, obedience, meekneſs, patience, love, ſeparation from ſin, communion with the Lord, and all the fruits of the Spirit, as natural to them in the renewed ſtate, as ever ſin was in the corrupt ſtate. And in that ſtate they ſhall be able to ſay with Paul; who once complained of his captivity, and that he did what he hated; yet after he had known the power of the croſs,

and was crucified with Chriſt, he could then do nothing againſt the truth, but for the truth; yea, then being a conqueror, having overcome the enemies which ſtood in his way, he could do all things through Chriſt that ſtrengthened him. The cauſe of ſo many complaints and bowings down of the head, and going mourning becauſe of the prevailings of the enemy, through temptations, ſin, and corruption, is becauſe the croſs of Chriſt, which is the power of God, (which is his ordinance againſt the ſtrength of the enemy) is either not known, or not taken up. And this is the reaſon that many that make a fair ſhew for a while, yet afterwards come to nothing, (but are like untimely figs, or like corn upon the houſe-tops, which haſtily ſpringeth up, but ſoon withereth) becauſe they either never rightly learn, or keep not to the croſs. For that alone hath power from God to bring down and keep down that which is contrary to him. So that from under the croſs of Chriſt, there is no witneſſing ſalvation or preſervation from the Lord; but out of the limits of the croſs, the enemy hath power to recover and bring back under his dominion again. And whoſoever in his travels leaves the croſs behind him, does draw back unto perdition, and not travel on, in the living faith, and newneſs of obedience, towards the ſalvation of the ſoul.

X. *Concerning the Myſtery of Life, and the Myſtery of the Fellowſhip which is therein.*

God is hid from man, as he lies in his ſinful and fallen ſtate; and no man can find or know him, but as he pleaſeth to reveal himſelf by his own bleſſed Spirit. And Chriſt, being God's image, there is no knowing or confeſſing him, or right calling him Lord, but in and by the ſame Spirit, 1 Cor. xii. 3. When he appeared in the days of his fleſh, fleſh and blood could not reveal him, but only the Father. And he is the ſame

ſame to-day as he was yeſterday. He is not to be known now, but in the ſame Spirit; in his own grace and truth, in a meaſure of his own life. The dead cannot know him; they only know him, who are his ſheep, who are quickened and made alive by him. And this life is a myſtery: none can underſtand it, but they that partake of it. Can a man that is naturally dead, know what the life of nature means? No more can a man that is ſpiritually dead, know what the life of the Spirit means. The natural man may get the words that came from life, and cry up them, and ſpeak great words of the ſame of wiſdom, and of her children; but the thing itſelf is hid from them all. Oh! it is a ſtrait gate at which the birth enters, at which none elſe can enter. The wiſe and prudent knowers and ſearchers after the fleſh (and of the ſcriptures, as they can put meanings upon them and comprehend them) are ſhut out in every age; but there is a babe born of naked truth (born of the pure ſimplicity) admitted by God, while men diſdain and deſpiſe it.

And the fellowſhip of the ſaints is in the life, and in the light, which is this myſtery. The fellowſhip is not outward, but inward. All they that meet together in the outward place, are not in the fellowſhip, or worſhip; but only they that meet together in the inward life and Spirit. "They that worſhip the Father, "muſt worſhip him in Spirit and truth." Look, there is the worſhip, there are the worſhippers; they that are in the Spirit, in the truth; they that meet in the Spirit, in the truth, they meet together in the one ſpiritual place, as I may call it. And ſo we own no man after the fleſh, no man according to the appearance; but in the righteous judgment of the Spirit, thoſe only who are of the Spirit. Indeed we are tender, where there is the leaſt beginning of the work of God in any heart; yea, where there is but ſo much as a conviction of the underſtanding; but men are not preſently of us, who own our principle in words or outward appearance, but only ſuch as are inwardly

changed thereby in the heart. It is true, perſons may walk among us, and afterwards go out from us, who were never of us, (as it was in the apoſtles days) that were never in the fellowſhip of life with us, whom we could never own in the ſight of the Lord, as being born of him; though we were willing to wait and watch for their good, that they might come to witneſs the true birth. Now from ſuch come the offences, even from the falling off of ſuch as never were truly ingrafted, and alſo from the ſlips of ſuch who are not watchful to that which preſerves. And woe is to the world, becauſe of the offences which cannot but come. For they which are to be approved in the ſight of the Lord, muſt not ſomewhat or other happen to make them manifeſt? And when they are made manifeſt, the world's eye is offended, and is apt to think hardly of, and reproach the truth itſelf, becauſe of them. Bleſſed is the eye which ſees into the myſtery, into the life itſelf, where there is no offence. Truth is one and the ſame for ever.

XI. *Concerning judging according to the appearance, and judging righteous judgment. Judge not according to the appearance,* (ſaid Chriſt) *but judge righteous judgment,* John vii. 24.

What is it to judge according to the appearance? and what is it to judge righteous judgment? I ſhall ſpeak what I have experienced, having been deeply exerciſed about this thing. Mark then:

The holy Spirit of life breatheth upon the heart; and, by his breathing and working there, he quickens and begets life, John iii. 8. And that which is begotten and born of him, is begotten and born in his nature, and ſo is of the ſame nature with him, as verſe 6. of that chapter.

Now to that which is born of the Spirit, the Spirit is the leader, the preſerver, the ſupporter, the comforter,

forter, the daily quickener. He can do nothing without the Spirit, without the preſent life and power of him that begat him: ſo that all the judgment which the birth of life hath, is from, and of, and in the Holy Spirit of the Father.

And here is true judgment, both concerning righteouſneſs, and againſt all unrighteouſneſs; ſo that keep to the life, keep to the Spirit, keep to the birth, keep to the power, then is the wiſdom and righteous judgment of God revealed: but any that go out of this, and meaſure without this, they meaſure in the unrighteouſneſs; and though they ſearch the ſcriptures, and think in themſelves they meaſure from the ſcriptures, yet they are miſtaken, and meaſure but from their own knowledge and apprehenſions upon the ſcriptures, as the Scribes and Phariſees did, when they ſeemed to conclude, upon ſearching the ſcriptures, that Chriſt could not be the Meſſiah, John vii. 52. "Search and look, (ſaid they) for out of Galilee "ariſeth no prophet." How then can this Galilean be he? See by the ſcriptures if this can be the Chriſt.

It is ſaid of Chriſt, "He ſhall not judge after the "ſight of his eyes, nor reprove after the hearing of "his ears, but with righteouſneſs ſhall he judge," &c. Iſa. xi. 3, 4. Chriſt judged righteous judgment. How came he to judge ſo? Why; he judged in and with the Spirit. He kept to the Spirit's judgment. The Spirit of the Lord reſted upon him, and made him quick of underſtanding in the fear of the Lord, ver. 2, 3. And no man can judge aright concerning the things of God, but in and by the ſame Spirit. How ſhall I know whether my duties be right, my prayers right, my ways right, my worſhip right, my faith right, my hope of the right kind, my knowledge and underſtanding of the ſcriptures right, &c.? Why there is none but one can determine. He who begetteth life, knows whether that which is in thee be from his life; and whether that which thou offereſt to him, be truly living or no: and when the Lord ſepa-

rates the living from the dead, what will remain in many that make great profeſſions at this day?

I would have no man miſtaken about theſe things; I know many are deeply miſtaken, as their own hearts will one day acknowledge, when the Lord ſhall make manifeſt to them, how they have called evil good, and good evil; and put darkneſs for light, and light for darkneſs. Indeed it is juſt as it was in the days of Chriſt's appearing outwardly in a body of fleſh. The ſame life, the ſame Spirit, is denied now as was then. Then the Jews cried up Chriſt to come; but they then ſpiritually ſaw him not. They ſaw the fleſh, (or outward form) but they ſaw not him who dwelt in that fleſh. And though the world of Chriſtians now acknowledge Chriſt is come, and did appear, yet neither do they know him who did appear, but deny his life, his Spirit, his virtue, his power, which is revealed in this day of his love and goodneſs to the eyes of the children of the true wiſdom. *Oh! let not fleſh judge: be ſilent, O all fleſh, before the Lord, and ceaſe judging, for he is ariſen to judge. He is Judge in the midſt of his people, and he will judge the heathen alſo.*

And every one bring this near. Wait to feel fleſh judged in thee, and brought down in thee, that it may not judge in thee; but Spirit and life may be exalted, and ſit upon the throne in thy heart: and when life is exalted, and doth begin to judge, Oh! take heed of hearkening to the fleſh, of letting in the judgment of fleſh afterwards, leſt the Spirit be grieved and quenched! For the wiſdom of the fleſh is near, and will be ſtriving to get in and recover its ſeat again; and if the watch be not ſingly kept to God's Holy Spirit, ſomewhat elſe will be judging in thee, which will judge according to the appearance of things to thy mind, and ſo thou wilt miſs of the true and righteous judgment of God's Spirit.

XII. *A queſtion anſwered about knowing God's Spirit.*

Queſt. *How ſhall I know God's Spirit? How ſhall I know the motions thereof? How may I know whether the faith and hope in my heart be from him? Whether my prayers and deſires ariſe thence, &c.*

Anſ. No man of himſelf, or by any way he of himſelf can take, can know God's Spirit: there muſt firſt be a capacity given before any man can know the Spirit of the Lord; his life, his power, muſt firſt be felt, and ſomewhat quickened, ſomewhat formed by him, ſomewhat begotten of him, which is Spirit, and this can know him. Now man in this may know him, but out of this can never know him. Therefore this is the great ſkill, and diligence, and wiſdom of a Chriſtian, to keep to this, to wait for this, to have his eye toward the pure ſpring of wiſdom, that, when it ſprings, he may diſcern and receive it; and when that which is of a contrary nature ſprings, he may diſcern it under all its deceitful appearances, and turn from it. For out of the heart are the iſſues both of life and death. There is all manner of deceivableneſs of unrighteouſneſs in the unrighteous nature, in the unrighteous ſpirit; and if the watch be not diligently kept, it is eaſy to be deceived at any time: but the true ſeed, the holy ſeed, the living ſeed, the elect ſeed, the immortal ſeed, is never deceived. Oh! bleſſed are they who have their eyes opened and kept open in it, to diſcern the myſtery of godlineſs and the myſtery of iniquity, that they may be preſerved ſafe in the one, out of the reach of the other!

XIII. *Some queries concerning the ſeed of the kingdom, in which the kingdom itſelf is contained, (as the nature and ſubſtance of things is contained in the ſeed thereof) and out of which it ſpringeth up and ariſeth in the heart.*

Query 1. What is that ſeed which is ſpoken of, 1 John iii. 9. which remaineth in thoſe that are born of God, and preſerveth out of ſin thoſe that are led by it and comprehended in it? Is it not the ſeed of the kingdom?

Query 2. Do not the natural herbs and flowers, the natural plants and trees, grow from a natural ſeed? Do not the ſpiritual plants, the ſpiritual trees, the trees of righteouſneſs, grow from the ſeed of righteouſneſs?

Query 3. Was it not the great doctrine of Chriſt to preach the kingdom? and how did he preach it? Did he not preach it as a ſeed, as a grain of muſtard-ſeed? and did he not liken this ſpiritual ſeed to leaven, to a precious pearl, to treaſure hid in a field, to a piece of ſilver loſt, &c. Oh! how happy is he who knows and enjoys the thing itſelf which Chriſt preached! All the prophets propheſied concerning him; and when he came, this was his doctrine, that men ſhould mind this, look after this, purchaſe this, poſſeſs this, feel this planted and grow up in them, and themſelves ingrafted into and growing up in it.

Query 4. Can any man be born of God, and not born of this ſeed? Can any man be born of this ſeed, and not be born of God?

Query 5. How doth grace and truth come by Jeſus Chriſt? Doth it not grow up from this ſeed? Can it grow up any other way in any heart?

Query 6. Is not ſalvation felt and witneſſed in every heart (of thoſe that are in any meaſure redeemed) as this ſeed grows up and overſhadows them? Was not this the ſalvation ready to be revealed in the laſt time,

1 Pet.

1 Pet. i. 10. whereof the apoſtle Peter himſelf was made a partaker? chap. v. 10. In the law were the ſhadows of good things to come; but in the goſpel the ſubſtance, the ſeed itſelf, is revealed.

Query 7. Is it not the right beginning in religion to begin in the Spirit? and can any begin in the Spirit, but he that begins in and with the ſeed of the kingdom?

Query 8. Is it not the main and chief thing in religion to know this ſeed, and to feel this ſeed, to be joined to this ſeed, and abide in this ſeed?

Query 9. Is not all that flows from this ſeed true and certain? Is not the knowledge certain here? the faith here? the love here? the peace here? the joy here? the righteouſneſs here? From this true root, can there grow or ſhoot forth any thing but that which is true? Oh! every breathing here is from pure life, and precious in the eye of the Father. Is there any certainty elſewhere? Oh! when the Lord appears, will he not diſown all the religion and worſhip which is not of this growth?

Query 10. But ſome may ſay, How may I know this ſeed, and how may I be joined to it?

Anſ. In the quickening life mayeſt thou know it, and no where elſe. Didſt thou ever feel that which quickened thy heart towards the Lord? Therein and thereby, at that time, thou mayeſt feel an eye and heart opened, which can truly ſee and know ſomewhat of God: and, keeping thy eye to the quickening power of God, as that ſtirs, moves and operates, in thee and upon thee, thou mayeſt know again and know more.

Therefore eye the power which quickens, and eye the ſeed which it reveals and raiſeth in thee, and wait to feel the power ſubjecting thee to the ſeed, that thou mayeſt come under it, and it may come over thee, and preſs down in thee all that is contrary to its pure nature.

And as thou comeſt hither, thou wilt find that which death hath no power over; and, as thou abideſt there,

there, thou ſhalt find it to have no power over thee. For, of a truth, in the holy covenant of life and peace, death never had nor can have power; but he who abideth in him who is the covenant, who is the Shepherd, who is the love, who is the wiſdom and power of God, witneſſeth there a ſure defence and ſtrong tower, where ſalvation is for a wall and bulwark againſt the enemy.

There are many ſorts of talkers concerning the thing, but there are few travellers into it; but he alone who is a true traveller into it, and takes up his reſt there, certainly knows and can truly witneſs what is to be found there. And this is the reaſon that ſo many (who ſeem great and experienced knowers) cannot receive our teſtimony, becauſe they know neither the ſeed nor its voice, concerning which and whereby we teſtify. But wiſdom is juſtified of her children; and they that know the voice of the Shepherd, know his preſent appearance in this our day, which is contrary to the wiſdom and knowledge of all other ſeeds and births whatſoever. "He that hath an ear to "hear, let him hear;" but he that hath not the true ear, cannot hear the true teſtimony, though it ſhould ever ſo often be declared unto him. But bleſſed is he that knows and ſtumbles not at the appearances of the ſeed and power of life in his own heart, but is turned from the darkneſs to the light there, and from the power of Satan to the manifeſtation of God's Spirit there. For the end of words (even of Chriſt's own directions in the days of his fleſh) is to turn men to the holy life and power from whence the words came; and thither man is to travel, and therein to center, waiting on the Lord, in the way of his judgments and tender mercies, to witneſs a tranſlation from darkneſs to light, and from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of the dear Son; which kingdom is at firſt but as a grain of muſtard-ſeed, and muſt be ſo known and ſo received.

And now let every ſerious heart examine concerning himſelf. Doſt thou know the kingdom? Is the ſeed grown

grown in thee? doth it overſpread thee? Art thou in it as in a kingdom? doſt thou feel it overſhadowing thee? art thou in unity with it? doth it ſpeak peace to thee from the Lord? Is the wall of partition broken down in thee? Is there of twain made one new man? Doſt thou feel that which is contrary to Chriſt ſubdued in thee by his power? and his holy nature, life, and Spirit, reigning over it? Canſt thou read that ſcripture ſenſibly and experimentally, "if ye through the "Spirit mortify the deeds of the body, ye ſhall live?"

Ah! how miſerably do men talk of Chriſt, the power of God, and miſs of the effect and work of his power in them!

Faith is a powerful thing, it gives victory, (true faith gives victory) it ſcatters that which ſtands between, and gives real acceſs to God, and lets in his pure, freſh, living virtue, upon the heart.

Love is a powerful thing, it conſtrains to obedience: and the heart that is circumciſed to love the Lord God, Oh! how doth life flow from him into it!

Oh! away with empty notions, and come to the miniſtration of the Spirit, where the knowledge is living, the faith victorious, the love pure and undefiled, the worſhip truly ſpiritual, even flowing from, and comprehended in, the life and virtue of the Spirit. Oh! that all that truly breathe after the Lord, might be gathered hither, found here, and dwell here. Amen.

POST-

Postscript to the Experiences.

PERSONS that have had ſome true touches of life, and true breathings after the Lord, yet not having their eye fixed rightly upon him, nor diſcerning from whence thoſe come, may eaſily loſe the true ſenſe of life, and another birth of another nature ſpring up in them inſtead thereof. This was it we generally wanted in the day of our former profeſſion, even the diſcerning of that, and fixing upon that, which begat life in us; through want whereof, many of the moſt tender-hearted came to a loſs; whom the Lord at length ſhewed mercy to, manifeſting to them the light of their eyes, and the ſtay of their ſouls. Now to all that have been gathered hither by the Lord, life hath been renewed, and their former experiences (of the Lord and his goodneſs to them in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt) reſtored again with advantage. And here they ſenſibly ſee, and daily experience, that nothing is of their own works, but all of grace and mercy in and through Chriſt, in whom they are created unto good works, which God before ordained that we ſhould walk in them. And here the glory is revealed; the glory of life, the glory of peace with the Lord, the glory of righteouſneſs in and through his Son, the glory of victory over the ſoul's enemies, and of leading captivity captive, and treading upon the necks of kings, even of mighty luſts, which mightily prevailed over and oppreſſed the ſoul, before the Captain of our ſalvation appeared in the power and authority of his own Spirit. But bleſſed be the Lord, there is not only this glory revealed, but there is a defence over the glory; for there is that revealed which is able to defend it, and doth defend it, in the hearts of many, and in the living aſſemblies which have

have been gathered by God's holy power; which holy power (which gathered) daily quickens and overſhadows, and is a rock unto, and will be ſo for ever, even to all that abide with him in his holy covenant; but out of the limits of that into which God gathers, and wherein and whereby he preſerves, there is no defence to any. The curſed thing, the unclean thing, the earthly ſpirit, the earthly mind and wiſdom, the Lord hath excluded, and it is to be excluded out of his camp for evermore, that the inward Iſrael may be kept holy to the Lord, and may ſerve and worſhip the Lord in the beauty of the inward holineſs, as the outward Iſrael was outwardly, to be, and to do, in that outward miniſtration of the ſhadows of the goſpel ſtate.

Some ſcriptures very ſweet, and neceſſary to be experienced in the goſpel ſtate.

" This is life eternal, that they might know thee " the only true God, and Jeſus Chriſt whom thou haſt " ſent," John xvii. 3. There is a knowledge of God and Chriſt, which is life eternal: and there is a knowledge of them (or at leaſt that which men call ſo) which is not life eternal. The knowledge which is life eternal, is that knowledge which God gives to his own birth; even the ſpiritual knowledge which God gives to thoſe which are born of the Spirit; which is the knowledge of the myſtery of God, and of Chriſt in the myſtery, inwardly appearing, and working in the heart againſt the myſtery of ſin and death. Oh! precious is the birth to which God gives this knowledge, and precious is the knowledge which he giveth to it. The knowledge (or that which men call knowledge) which is not life eternal, is that knowledge which man can get and comprehend from without, of himſelf, without the enlightenings and quickenings of God's Holy Spirit and power inwardly felt, and operating in the heart.

" No

" No man can ſay that Jeſus is the Lord, but by " the Holy Ghoſt," 1 Cor. xii. 3. It is precious to witneſs that confeſſing and acknowledging Jeſus to be the Lord, which is by the Holy Ghoſt. For only they that are governed by the Holy Ghoſt can ſo confeſs him. The devil did confeſs Jeſus to be the Holy One, the Son of the living God, &c. and many now confeſs Jeſus to be the Lord, in the ſame ſpirit, being alienated from the life of God, and having no true ſenſe or underſtanding of that. But there is a confeſſion which cannot ariſe but from God's Spirit, and from the knowledge, ſenſe, and underſtanding which he gives; bleſſed are they that experience that.

" It is written in the prophets, and they ſhall be all " taught of God. Every man therefore that hath " heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto " me," John vi. 45. Ah! bleſſed is he that can in true underſtanding ſay, The Lord hath made good this promiſe to me! he is become my teacher. I have heard his voice, as truly and certainly, inwardly in my heart, as ever I heard the voice of Satan there. He hath revealed his Son, his pure, holy, living child Jeſus in me. He hath drawn me to his Son; he hath taught me to come to his Son: and indeed ſo ſoon as ever I heard and learned of the Father, I could not but come to the Son, and receive the Son, and give up myſelf to him: and he hath received me, and daily preſerveth me from death, and the ſting and power thereof, and giveth unto me eternal life.

" He that hath the Son, hath life; and he that hath " not the Son, hath not life," 1 John v. 12. Ah! this is abundantly experienced! bleſſed be the name of the Lord! Many who had not life, while they had not the Son, but mourned and lamented deeply after him, (the Spirit of the Lord being grieved in them, and his life not poſſeſſed by them) the Father revealing his Son in them, and giving him to them, and they enjoying and poſſeſſing him, feel that they are daily in the enjoyment and poſſeſſion of pure and freſh life in him.

" My

" My flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink " indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my " blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him," John vi. 55, 56. We are of his flesh, and of his bone, said they that did eat his flesh, and drink his blood. They that eat Christ the one bread, are by that food made partakers of his divine nature, and become one bread (for we being many, are one bread, as said the apostle); so that now they are no longer darkness, but light in the Lord. Oh! the pure flesh and blood of the immaculate Lamb! Oh! the incorruptible food which gives life to the soul! Oh! the living word! Oh! the milk of this word, the milk of the heavenly breast, which nourisheth the babes! but the bread, the flesh, the blood, is stronger nourishment. Oh! how brightly might this be opened, in the demonstration of life, to the spiritual ear and understanding! but the carnal-minded are thick and gross, being drowned in their own apprehensions and sense of the letter, but having no sense of the mystery, what it is mystically to eat and drink the flesh and blood of Christ, (of him who is life, and gives life) and to dwell together with him in the one Spirit, light, life, and power eternal.

" For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy " light shall we see light," Psal. xxxvi. 9. Oh! blessed are they that can experimentally speak thus, who know the fountain of life, and dwell there, where light shines more and more!

" Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the " waters; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy " and eat: yea come, buy wine and milk without " money, and without price. Wherefore do ye spend " money for that which is not bread? and your la- " bour for that which satisfieth not? hearken dili- " gently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, " and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline " your ear, and come unto me; hear, and your soul " shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant " with you, even the sure mercies of David," Isaiah lv.

lv. 1, 2, 3. Here is happineſs, true happineſs, full happineſs! He that experiences this one portion of ſcripture is happy. He that knows the true thirſt after the true waters, and comes to the waters which he thirſts after, and knows how to buy, and hath bought the wine and milk which is to be had at the waters (Oh! who knows what this buying is! this is beyond all talk and outward profeſſion concerning the thing, concerning the precious pearl; this is the real, hearty trafficking of the wiſe merchant for it). And then to hearken diligently, and eat that which is good, and to have the ſoul delight itſelf in the fatneſs of God's houſe, in the riches and fatneſs of his goodneſs and mercy in Chriſt Jeſus; and not only to taſte of mercy, but to witneſs it ſure in the everlaſting covenant, that God will never be wroth with me more, never be a ſtranger to me more, never depart from me more, nor ſuffer me to depart from him; but preſerve me pure and chaſte to him, through his love ſhed abroad in my heart, and his holy fear, which conſtrains me to abide with him, and to keep his commandments.

" But whoſoever drinketh of the water that I ſhall " give him, ſhall never thirſt: but the water that I " ſhall give him, ſhall be in him a well of water " ſpringing up into everlaſting life," John iv. 14. Is not this an univerſal promiſe, to be made good to every one that drinks of the water of life, of the water that Chriſt gives? Did not Chriſt promiſe it ſhould be a well? a ſpringing well? The fountain is of a ſpringing nature: and is not every drop of the ſame nature? of a living nature? of a ſpringing nature? He that rightly drinks, doth he not receive a well? Oh! the water which Chriſt giveth! doth it not become a well in the true diſciple, in the living diſciple, out of which well the water is ſtill ſpringing and flowing, to nouriſh up with life and unto life, even with life of an everlaſting nature, and unto life everlaſting. Oh! the pure glory that is revealed in the goſpel diſpenſation! why is it ſo hid from mens eyes,

eyes, who profeſs themſelves to know the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and to be his diſciples?

" For the life was manifeſted, and we have ſeen it; " and bear witneſs, and ſhew unto you that eternal " life which was with the Father, and was manifeſted " unto us. That which we have ſeen and heard, de- " clare we unto you, that ye alſo may have fellowſhip " with us; and truly our fellowſhip is with the " Father, and with his Son Jeſus Chriſt," 1 John i. 2, 3. This is precious to experience the life inwardly manifeſted, and to come out of death inwardly felt, into life inwardly manifeſted, and ſo to come into the holy fellowſhip with the Father and Son, and with the ſaints in light: for he that comes out of the darkneſs into the light, comes out of the fellowſhip of the dead into the fellowſhip of the living.

" Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy " laden, and I will give you reſt. Take my yoke " upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and " lowly in heart: and ye ſhall find reſt unto your " ſouls. For my yoke is eaſy, and my burthen is " light," Matt. xi. 28, 29, 30. This invitation of Chriſt was to be fulfilled in the hearts of his diſciples; and it is precious inwardly to witneſs it effectually in the heart, as really as ever it was ſpoken by him. To be able to ſay, in the evidence and demonſtration of his Spirit, It is true, I did labour, I was heavy laden, none could eaſe or help me, till he called, till he knocked at the door of my heart, and till I came to him, and received him in; and he hath made good his word to my ſoul; he hath given me reſt from my labours and heavy loads. He hath laid his yoke upon me, and I have took it and borne it, and have learned of him to be meek and lowly in heart like him, and I have found reſt to my ſoul. And now I ſhall never complain more of his yoke or burthen, he hath made it, and doth daily make it, ſo eaſy and light to me.

" And we know that the Son of God is come, and " hath given us an underſtanding, that we may know

" him that is true; and we are in him that is true, " even in his Son Jeſus Chriſt. This is the true God " and eternal life," 1 John v. 20. There is an inward, ſpiritual coming of the Son of God into the heart, by which coming (to them that receive him) he giveth a new and ſpiritual underſtanding, whereby they know him that is true, (and without it they cannot) and are ingrafted into him and found in him; partaking of his life and righteouſneſs, to the glory of God the Father; and ſo in true underſtanding are able to ſay, " Lo this is the God, this is the Saviour " we waited for. This is the true or very God, and " eternal life." What are all notions about God, and about his Son Chriſt Jeſus, to this inward ſenſe and experience of them?

" God, who commanded the light to ſhine out " of darkneſs, hath ſhined in our hearts, to give the " light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the " face of Jeſus Chriſt," 2 Cor. iv. 6. Oh! how precious is it to be able to witneſs this in meaſure! to experience God ſhining upon my tabernacle, (as Job ſpeaks, Job xxix. 2, 3.) and by his light my walking through darkneſs! It is true, Chriſt was the light, he had the fulneſs of light, and the apoſtles a very great proportion: but, bleſſed be the Lord, I have received ſome, and am changed by it, and become light in the Lord; and walk with God, and dwell with God in the light, even as he is light, and dwells and walks in the light. Is not this a bleſſed teſtimony? and is not he bleſſed who can ſet his ſeal to it?

" Which veil is done away in Chriſt," 2 Cor. iii. 14. It was promiſed of old, that in the mountain, where God would make the feaſt of fat things, he would deſtroy, ſwallow up, or do away the veil, or that which veils the life and glory of the Lord from man, and hinders it from being revealed in him, Iſaiah xxv. 6, 7. Now in Chriſt there is no veil; in his light, life, Spirit, and power, there is no veil: where they are inwardly manifeſted and received, the veil

veil is done away, and the glory of the myſtery revealed and beheld.

" If ye continue in my word, then are ye my diſci-
" ples indeed; and ye ſhall know the truth, and the
" truth ſhall make you free," John viii. 31, 32. What is this word which the diſciples of the Lord Jeſus Chriſt are to continue in? Is it any leſs than Spirit and life? And what is it to be a diſciple indeed, but to learn the law of life at his mouth, and to continue therein? And what is the truth which makes free? Is it not the living truth, (the word which lives and abides for ever) the powerful truth, the operative truth? This cuts between a man and his lovers; this divides between ſoul and ſpirit, joints and marrow, and makes the ſoul free from that evil ſpirit which hath embondaged it. It ſanctifieth, it cleanſeth, it reneweth, it quickeneth, it giveth ſtrength, it maketh free from the ſoul's enemies, from the bondage of ſin and corruption, and brings into the glorious liberty of the ſons of God: and they that are made free from ſin by that which is contrary to ſin, and which ſubdues, overcomes, and deſtroys ſin, they doubtleſs are free indeed. Oh! precious is it to experience this, even the truth that is free from ſin, and makes free from ſin all that truly know it, and are joined to it, and live and abide in it!

" For ſin ſhall not have dominion over you; for
" ye are not under the law, but under grace," Rom. vi. 14. What's the law? what's the miniſtration of the law? Is it not the miniſtration of the letter? of that which is holy and righteous, by an outward or literal command? What's grace? Is it not the inward teacher, which inwardly inſtructeth to deny ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, and to live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly, &c.? Is it not the miniſtration of the Spirit and power? Is it not the miniſtration of the new covenant, where the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus is written in the heart, and the commandment of life made eaſy by the power of the Lord

Jeſus, who manifeſts himſelf within to make willing unto, and to ſtrengthen to obedience?

Now they that are under this grace, under this Spirit, under this power, doth it not break the power and dominion of ſin in them, and ſet them free therefrom? Can ſin break in upon thoſe who dwell under the ſhadow of the Almighty? Indeed a man may be under a literal diſpenſation of holy commands againſt ſin, and yet be under the power of ſin: but he that is gathered under the wing of Chriſt, under the grace and Spirit of the goſpel, turned from Satan's power to God's power, and within the wall and bulwark thereof, he witneſſeth this true, *Sin hath not dominion, ſin cannot have dominion, ſin ſhall not have dominion over you.* No device of the enemy ſhall be able to hurt or deſtroy on God's holy mountain; for his light ſhines there to diſpel the darkneſs, and his power is revealed there, to ſcatter and daſh in pieces the ſtrength of the enemy whenever it appears.

"Upon all the glory ſhall be a defence," Iſaiah iv. 5. Oh! the Lord God, by the Spirit and power of the goſpel, in the day thereof, is bringing many ſons to glory, into great, inward, ſpiritual glory; yea, into exceeding glory (for the miniſtration of the Spirit exceeds in glory). And as God hath ordained this glorious miniſtration for his ſons and daughters under the new covenant, ſo by the Spirit and power of the new covenant, when it breaks forth, he is daily working, tranſlating, and changing them, out of the earthly nature and image, into his own divine nature, into his own heavenly glory, 2 Cor. iii. 18. And, bleſſed be the Lord, the defence of his power is ſpread over the glory of his holy mountain, ſo that nothing can make a prey of, or devour the birth of life, or deprive of the inheritance of life there. The Lord doth not only give a bleſſed lot and lines in pleaſant places, but he maintains the lot of his children; ſo that they can dwell in their Father's houſe, and feed on the heavenly food and rich dainties of the kingdom, in the majeſty of the name of the Lord their God; which

which is such a dread unto the enemies, and such a defence about them, as none can make afraid: but they are kept in perfect peace, in perfect rest, in pure love, out of which life springs and flows continually.

" And in that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will " praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine " anger is turned away, and thou comfortest me. " Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust and not " be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and " song, he also is become my salvation. Therefore " with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of " salvation," Isaiah xii. 1, 2, 3. Oh! precious to witness the inward spiritual day of redemption and deliverance, wherein praises from a living sense naturally spring up to the Lord! to witness the reproofs at an end, the anger, indignation, trouble, and sorrow at an end, and the Comforter come, ministering peace, joy, and comfort to the soul! Ah! when the Lord is felt, the salvation (his presence, his power, his life, his virtue the salvation); when faith springs towards him, and the fear of the enemy (or concerning the enemy) is banished; when he is experienced to be the soul's daily strength against him; yea, and doth so deliver, that instead of the former fear, because of the fury and oppression of the enemy, the soul can now sing, because of that strength and heavenly authority, which the Lord putteth forth and exerciseth in the heart against him! When the well of life, the well of salvation, the Saviour's well, is kept open, and the Philistines, the uncircumcised spirit, power, and nature, cast out, that they can stop it no more; but the soul can draw the water of life out of the well and fountain of life with joy; ah! then the gospel dispensation is indeed known, and the blessed estate thereof witnessed and experienced!

" I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the " fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, " that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of " thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes " with eye-salve, that thou mayest see," Rev. iii. 18.

What is the gold tried in the fire, which man is to buy of Chriſt, that he may be made rich therewith? What is the white raiment which the ſoul is to be clothed with, without which it is naked in God's ſight, and in the ſight of the truly diſcerning (and there is a time when the ſhame of its nakedneſs will appear more generally, as it doth already to the eye of the ſpiritual man who judgeth all things)? What is the eye-ſalve wherewith the eye is to be anointed, or it cannot ſee? Is it not precious to purchaſe this gold and raiment of Chriſt, and to have this eye-ſalve to anoint the eye with, and to keep it open that it may daily ſee its way, and walk in the light of the Lord? Certainly this is all inward and ſpiritual, as a remnant witneſs it this day; glory to the Lord God.

" But the anointing which ye have received of " him, abideth in you; and ye need not that any " man teach you: but as the ſame anointing teach- " eth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie; " and even as it hath taught you, ye ſhall abide in " him," 1 John ii. 27. The outward anointing was a ſhadow of the inward, and had a glory in it under the diſpenſation of the law; and the inward anointing in the goſpel diſpenſation is ſpiritual and divine, and exceeding glorious. Chriſt, the anointed one, anoints all his. No being a ſon, without being begotten by the Spirit and power of the Father; and no abiding a ſon, but by the virtue and power of the ſame Spirit, remaining in and with the ſoul; ſo that every ſon receives of the anointing of the Father: Chriſt received the Spirit, the fulneſs, that he might give to them a proportion. Now to experience this anointing, and to experience it abiding and teaching all things; and to know this voice, the voice of the Shepherd, the voice of the anointing, which the ſheep ſtill finds to be true, and no lie; and to abide in the vine, in the life, in the Spirit, in the power, as this Spirit or anointing teacheth: Oh! here's the ſweet ſtate, the clear ſtate, the bleſſed ſtate! Here the promiſes and bleſſings are Yea and Amen in Chriſt: and the ſoul

can

can ſay, he is faithful and juſt who hath promiſed, who hath opened the treaſures of life to his family, to his houſe, to his children, to his ſervants, and bleſſeth them with all ſpiritual bleſſings, in heavenly things, in Chriſt.

" Surely his ſalvation is nigh them that fear him, " that glory may dwell in our land: mercy and truth " are met; righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed. Truth " ſhall ſpring out of the earth; and righteouſneſs " ſhall look down from heaven. Yea, the Lord " ſhall give that which is good; and our land ſhall " yield her increaſe. Righteouſneſs ſhall go before " him, and ſhall ſet us in the way of his ſteps," Pſal. lxxxv. 9. to the end. Is it not precious to witneſs that fear of God in the heart to which ſalvation is nigh, and the land wherein glory dwells? Where mercy and truth meet, righteouſneſs and peace kiſs? Where truth ſprings out of the earth, and righteouſneſs looks down from heaven? Where God gives that which is good, and the land of the living yields the increaſe of life to him? Where righteouſneſs goes before him, and he ſets his in the way of his ſteps? Where the Lamb goes before, and the way is not known, but as the Lamb goes before, and leads into it? Where God is the Shepherd, and the ſoul doth not want, becauſe he maketh it to lie down in paſtures of tender graſs, and leadeth by the waters of quietneſs, (where it drinks of the brook in the way) and in the paths of righteouſneſs for his name's ſake? See Pſal. xxiii. Is there not a kingdom of darkneſs, a land of iniquity inwardly? and do not they that dwell there, and ſit there, dwell in darkneſs, and ſit in the region and ſhadow of death? And is there not a travel out of this land into the holy land, (the land of light, the land of the living) and a tranſlation out of this kingdom into the kingdom of the dear Son? And is not God the Shepherd there? Chriſt the Biſhop of the ſoul there? and doth not he overſee and take care of ſouls there, leading them into freſh paſtures, and by the ſoft flowing waters? Is not ſalvation nigh there, yea, round about that land? Do not mercy and truth meet

there? righteouſneſs and peace kiſs there? yea, doth not the glory of the Moſt High dwell in, and overſhadow that land? Is not the eye of the Lord upon it for good, from one end of the year to the other? doth not he watch over it night and day, that none hurt it, and water it in the proper ſeaſons? Oh! who can utter the goodneſs and glory of the Lord which is revealed and ſhines here!

Rev. iii. 20. "Behold, I ſtand at the door, and "knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the "door, I will come in to him, and will ſup with him, "and he with me." Here are ſeveral things, which, in their order and ſeaſons, the living come to a certain and ſenſible experience of.

As, Firſt, Chriſt's ſtanding at the door, and knocking. What is the door at which he ſtands? and how doth he knock? How doth the contrary ſpirit knock? how doth his Spirit knock?

Secondly, What is his voice? and how is his voice heard? To hear Wiſdom's cry within, in the inward ſtreets; his call at the door, at which he would enter; muſt not the true ear in ſome meaſure be opened firſt? Can any one hear without an ear?

Thirdly, What it is to open the door? There is a door-keeper's ſtate to be witneſſed, and the right door-keeper knows how to open and how to ſhut the door, and is exerciſed in opening and ſhutting the door. The King of glory is to be opened to, and let in, but no wolf, no ſtranger, no ſtrange ſpirit, is to be hearkened or opened to.

Fourthly, What Chriſt's coming in is at the door opened to him? When he knocks, would he not come in? Would he ſtand always at the door knocking? Nay, nay; when the door is opened at which he knocks, he who is the reſurrection and the life enters; the King of righteouſneſs, the King of peace, enters; he who is the wiſdom and power of God enters; and what becomes of the power and goods of the enemy then? Doth he not kill and deſtroy them? Doth he not conſume and devour them. Doth he not empty the

the houſe of them, and garniſh the houſe with that which is truly pure, glorious, and beautiful?

Laſtly, What is it to have him ſup with the ſoul? And what is it for the ſoul to ſup with him? Is not here eating and drinking in his Father's kingdom? Doth he not firſt deſtroy the devil's kingdom, and then ſet up his own kingdom? And doth he not faſt with the ſoul, and feaſt with the ſoul, in the kingdom which he ſets up there? Oh! that all men knew how near he who is eternal life, is to them! Doth not God ſearch the heart? Is not he near the heart? Doth not his light ſhine there, in the midſt of man's darkneſs and corruption? Doth not his power reach thither, and aſſault and trouble the enemy? Doth not his pure love wherewith he loveth man pierce thither? Doth he not knock? Doth he not call? Doth he not touch? Doth he not draw? Doth he not give, at times, ſome living tender ſenſe to many hearts, who too much neglect and deſpiſe him, and regard not the day of his tender viſiting them, and calling after them? Oh! how is the love of God, the Spirit of God, the life of God, the wiſdom of God, the power of God, the drawings and inſtructions of his grace day by day reſiſted by the wiſdom and will of the fleſh, in thoſe that are born thereof, and hearken thereto, and ſo live after the fleſh, and not after that which reproves the fleſh?

Many more ſcriptures might be mentioned, and alſo ſenſibly and livingly witneſſed to; but theſe are enough to give a taſte. The Lord open mens underſtandings into the thing itſelf, and give them the key which opens into the truth, even into the myſtery thereof, wherein is the hidden life and virtue. Amen.

A few

A few words concerning the true Chriſt; how it may be certainly and infallibly known which is he.

This queſtion relates not to his outward appearance, in the days of his fleſh; but to his inward and ſpiritual appearance, how it may be known. To which the anſwer on my heart is, Even after the ſame way, and by the ſame means is he to be known in his inward appearance, as he was known in his outward; which was by the revealing of the Father. For "none "knows the Son but by the Father, and he to whom "the Father reveals him." And when Simon Peter confeſſed him to be Chriſt, the Son of the living God, "Bleſſed (ſaid he) art thou, Simon Bar-Jona; for "fleſh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but "my Father which is in heaven," Matth. xvi. 16, 17.

And if none could know Chriſt in his appearance in the fleſh, notwithſtanding ſo many manifeſt and expreſs prophecies concerning him, but ſuch only to whom the Father revealed him; how ſhall any know his inward and ſpiritual appearance, unleſs they be taught of the Father, and hear and learn of him ſo to do?

But more particularly to ſhew how the Father revealed his Son, and how they came to know in that day that he was the Son of the living God, the Holy One, the anointed Saviour; and that the ſame way, and by the ſame means, people that will truly know him, muſt come to the knowledge of him now;

Firſt, They came to know him by the manifeſtation of the life that was in him, by the fulneſs of the grace and truth which dwelt in him, and put itſelf forth, ſo as to be diſcerned by the inward and ſpiritual eye in them. "For the life was manifeſted," 1 John i. 2. The life which was in him was manifeſted to the ſpiritual eye which was in them: and thus they came to know him.

Secondly,

Secondly, By his voice and knocks. Thus ſaid he concerning his ſheep in thoſe days, "that they knew "his voice," John x. 4. Oh! he hath ſuch a voice, as none hath but he! He ſpeaks in his Father's authority (not as the ſcribes, not as earthly-wiſe, learned men); he ſpeaks in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit. The words which he ſpeaks are Spirit and life; they that hear his voice live; and when he ſtands at the door and knocks, he pierceth deep.

Oh! the beatings of his hand upon the tender and ſenſible hearts and conſciences! Oh! his ſecret reproofs, his ſecret inſtructions, his ſecret quickenings and enlightenings! How did they, and how do they, eternally make him manifeſt in the hearts and conſciences of his?

Thirdly, By his baptiſm, or by his baptizing into his own Spirit and power. While people were in expectation, and muſed in their hearts of John, whether he were the Chriſt or not, John anſwers the caſe, and tells them how they might diſcern and know the true Chriſt. It is not I, who baptize with water; but he that baptizeth "with the Holy Ghoſt, and with fire; "whoſe fan is his hand," &c. Luke iii. 15, 16, 17. Was not this *then*, and is not this *now*, the way to know the true Chriſt? He that knoweth him who inwardly and ſpiritually baptizeth, him who hath the fan, who inwardly fanneth and purgeth the floor, gathering in the wheat, and burning up the chaff, doth not he inwardly, truly, and ſpiritually know Chriſt? He that knoweth the word, which is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing, even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a diſcerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart; doth not he know "the word which was in the beginning, "which was with God," yea, "which was God?" For he is the only ſearcher of the heart, and trier of the reins.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, By his mighty works. "The works "which the Father hath given me to finiſh, the ſame "works that I do, bear witneſs of me, that the Fa-"ther hath ſent me," John v. 36. And when John ſent two of his diſciples to Jeſus with this queſtion: "Art thou he that ſhould come, or look we for an-"other?" Chriſt bids them go and tell John what things they had ſeen and heard; "how that the blind "ſee, the lame walk, the lepers are cleanſed, the "deaf hear, the dead are raiſed, to the poor the "goſpel is preached; and bleſſed is he whoſoever "ſhall not be offended in me," Luke vii. 22, 23. "Why herein is a marvellous thing," (ſaid the blind man) "that ye know not from whence he is, and "yet he hath opened my eyes" John ix. 10. He who hath the power, and putteth forth the power inwardly; who openeth the inward eye, the inward ear, looſeth the inward tongue, cauſeth the inward feet to walk in the way of life, and the inward hands to work the works of God; he is the Meſſiah, the Saviour, the Word of life, the Son of the living God. They that believe in him, in his Spirit, in his power, in his inward appearance, have the witneſs in themſelves, the living teſtimony, which none can put out, or take away from them. He hath opened mine eyes, he hath opened my heart, he hath raiſed me out of the grave, he hath given me eternal life. He hath changed me inwardly, created me inwardly, by the working of his mighty power; and I daily live, and am preſerved, and grow by the ſame power. I feel his life, his virtue, his power, his preſence day by day. He is with me, he lives in me; and I live not of myſelf, but by feeling him to live in me, finding life ſpring up from him into me, and through me; and therein lies all my ability and ſtrength for evermore.

A few

A few words in the bowels of tender love and good-will to my native country.

It is written, "When thy judgments are in the "earth, the inhabitants of the world ſhall learn "righteouſneſs." Oh! that this might be verified concerning thee, O England! even that thou mighteſt learn righteouſneſs, and that the days of thy unrighteouſneſs might come to an end! Have not God's judgments been upon thee? Yea, are not God's judgments ſtill upon thee? And can any thing divert them from coming more upon thee, but thy ſpeedy returning unto the Lord, in breaking off thy ſins by unfeigned repentance? Oh! that thou mighteſt be ſenſible of the hand of the Lord, and mighteſt hear the rod, and him who hath appointed it! The Lord hath power over all nations, and can break them in pieces as a potter's veſſel. They are but as the drop of a bucket, as the ſmall duſt of the balance; they are before him as nothing, and are counted to him leſs than nothing, and vanity.

Read Iſai. xxiv. ſee how God will plead with nations, and conſider whether he be not dealing thus with thee? Oh! hath not that been found in thee, and is not that found in thee, which provoketh the Lord exceedingly? Oh! that the weighty ſenſe of thy ſins were upon thee, and that thou mighteſt truly repent, and turn from them; that thou mighteſt reap the benefit of God's judgments, and learn righteouſneſs, and his indignation might be removed from thee, and his tender bowels of compaſſion move towards thee.

But perhaps ſome may ſay, *What is the righteouſneſs we ſhould learn?*

Anſ. Oh! learn to know God; that is a righteous thing. Learn to fear God; learn to worſhip him aright. How is that? Why in his own Spirit and truth, in which he ſeeks to be worſhipped. Learn humility

humility towards God; learn juſtice and mercy towards men; learn to love thy enemies. If ye will be Chriſtians, that is the law of Chriſt; but that which is called the Chriſtian world, many of them have not yet learned ſo much as to love their friends: but hate and perſecute ſuch as fear the Lord, and ſeek their good, and ſtand in the gap to keep back the wrath of the Lord from breaking in upon them, and are wreſtling mightily with him, with ſtrong cries, that he would ſtay the ſharpneſs thereof, that it might not break forth to their deſtruction.

Learn to do to others as ye would be done to. Do not do to any, becauſe of their religion and tender conſciences towards the Lord, what ye would not have done to yourſelves becauſe of your religion. How long will it be ere ye learn this? How many judgments and diſtreſſes ſhall come upon you, before ye bow in ſpirit under the mighty hand of God, and yield yourſelves in ſubmiſſion to him, to learn theſe things of him?

Queſt. *But how ſhall we learn righteouſneſs?*

Anſ. Retire inwardly to that, and hearken inwardly to that, which gives the ſenſe of judgments, and learn of that; and that will wean you inwardly from all your unrighteouſneſs, and teach you righteouſneſs. There is that inwardly in the unregenerate which hardens and miſleads; there is alſo that inwardly which tenders, melts, teacheth, and leadeth aright, as it is believed in and obeyed.

Oh! that men knew the difference between theſe two, and how to turn from the one to the other! For out of the heart proceeds all that is evil and vain, and out of the heart are the iſſues of life alſo. The well or puddle of the muddy waters, of the waters of Egypt, of the wine of Sodom, and waters of Babylon, is there; and the well and ciſtern of the pure waters is there alſo.

Oh! my native country, that thou mighteſt be the firſt nation in this age of the world that might paſs through the judgments of God, and be cleanſed thereby,

thereby, and be happy! Oh! that thy rulers and governors were weaned from the ſpirit and wiſdom of this world, and might receive of God's holy Spirit and wiſdom, and judge and govern themſelves and the people thereby! When the Jew outward was choſen to be the people of God, did not he pour out of his Spirit to govern them by? Were the judges, kings, and leaders thereof only anointed with outward oil? Were they not alſo anointed with God's Spirit? And can any Chriſtian magiſtrate govern aright any Chriſtian nation without the aſſiſtance and guidance of the ſame Spirit? And oh! that all the people were anointed alſo, that they might be inwardly kings and prieſts to the Lord, and the kingdom of Chriſt might be inwardly ſet up in all their hearts, and every man might reign, in and through him, over the enemies of his own ſoul! Oh! that the power and glory of the Lord might cover thy governors and inhabitants, O England! Oh! the prayers that have been long put up in bowels of tenderneſs for thee! Oh! the beſom of the Lord, the beſom of his righteous judgments, that it might ſweep the hearts of men inwardly, that this nation might be prepared for the glory of the Lord (for the glory which he reveals in his heavenly birth) to break forth outwardly, to the admiration and magnifying of the work of his power in the eyes of all beholders! Amen, Amen.

THE

THE FLESH and BLOOD OF CHRIST,

In the MYSTERY and in the OUTWARD,

Briefly, plainly, and uprightly Acknowledged, and Teſtified to;

For the Satisfaction and Benefit of the Tender-hearted,

WHO

Deſire to Experience the Quickening, Healing, and Cleanſing VIRTUE of it.

WITH

A BRIEF ACCOUNT concerning the People called QUAKERS, in Reference both to Principle and Doctrine.

Whereunto are added,

Some few other Things, which, by the Bleſſing of God, may be experimentally found uſeful to the true Pilgrims and faithful Travellers out of the Nature and Spirit of this World.

Written in true Love and Tenderneſs of Spirit by

ISAAC PENINGTON.

"And without Controverſy great is the Myſtery of Godlineſs. God was ma-
"nifeſt in the fleſh, juſtified in the Spirit, ſeen of angels, preached unto the Gen-
"tiles, believed on in the world, received up into Glory," 1 Tim. iii. 16.

"Of whom are the Fathers, and of whom as concerning the Fleſh Chriſt
"came, who is over all, God bleſſed for ever. Amen." Rom. ix. 5.

THE PREFACE.

HAVING been lately at London, upon occaſion of a meeting between ſome of the people called QUAKERS, and ſome of the people called ANABAPTISTS, and other confederates, wherein I was ſomewhat concerned, being charged or brought in by Thomas Hicks, in his ſecond book of Dialogues, called *Continuation*, p. 4. to prove, that the QUAKERS account the blood of Chriſt no more than a common thing; and having been at that meeting to clear my innocency in that particular; but the thing not then coming in queſtion, and I being to return to my habitation in the country (though I ſtaid alſo a ſecond meeting for that purpoſe); it was on my heart, in the clearneſs and innocency thereof, to give forth this teſtimony, to take off that untruth and calumny of T. H. both from the people called QUAKERS, and myſelf; being both of us greatly therein injured, as the Lord God of heaven and earth knoweth. I have had experience of that deſpiſed people for many years, and I have often heard them (even the ancient ones of them) own Chriſt both inwardly and outwardly. Yea, I heard one of the ancients of them thus teſtify, in a publick meeting many years ſince, That if Chriſt had not come in the fleſh, in the fulneſs of time, to bear our ſins in his own body on the tree, and to offer himſelf up a ſacrifice for mankind, all mankind had utterly periſhed.

What cauſe then have we to praiſe the Lord God, for ſending his Son, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh, and for what his Son did therein! O profeſſors! do not pervert our words (by reading them with a preju-

diced mind) quite contrary to the drift of God's Spirit by us! If ye ſhould thus read the holy ſcriptures, yea, the very words of Chriſt himſelf therein, and give that wiſdom of yours which fights againſt us ſcope to comment upon them, and perverts them after this manner, what a ſtrange and hideous appearance of untruth and contradiction to the very ſcriptures of the Old Teſtament might ye make of that wonderful appearance of God? For the words of Chriſt ſeemed ſo fooliſh and impoſſible to the wiſe men of that age, that they frequently contradicted, and ſometimes derided him.

If we be not of God, we ſhall come to nought; nay, we had not ſtood to this day, if his mighty power had not upheld us. We could not have ſtood inwardly, nor could we have ſtood outwardly, againſt the fierce aſſaults we have met with both ways. And as we have not had by-ends to move us inwardly, ſo neither have we had by-ends to move us outwardly, as our God knoweth.

Oh! T. H. doſt thou believe the eternal judgment at the great day, not outwardly only in notion, but inwardly in heart? Oh! then conſider how thou wilt anſwer it to God, for ſaying ſo many things in the name of a people, as their belief and words, which never were ſpoken by any one of them, nor ever came into any one of their hearts! Innocency in me, life in me, truth in me, the Chriſtian ſpirit and nature in me, is a witneſs againſt thee, that thou wroteſt thy dialogues out of the Chriſtian nature and ſpirit; and thy brethren, William Kiffin and the reſt, who have ſtood by thee to juſtify thee, (or at leaſt ſeemed ſo to do) muſt take notice of theſe things, and condemn them in thee, or they will expoſe themſelves (and their religion) to the righteous judgment of God, and of all who love truth, and hate forgery and deceit.

I pity thee; yea, I can truly ſay, I forgive thee the injury thou haſt done me (though indeed it is very great, thus to repreſent me publickly; what thou couldſt not have done, if thou hadſt equally conſidered

conſidered the things written in that book); and I alſo deſire that thou mayeſt be ſenſible of what thou haſt ſo evilly done, and confeſs it before God, that he alſo might forgive thee. Oh! I would not bear the weight of this ſin at the judgment ſeat of Chriſt for ten thouſand worlds! And that theſe books ſhould be ſo long publick, and thy brethren take no notice of them, but rather at laſt apply themſelves to juſtify thee, oh! how will they anſwer this thing, when they come to anſwer it for ever! Oh! why will ye ſet up an intereſt againſt our Lord Chriſt, (who is the truth, and teacheth truth) and bend all your ſtrength and underſtanding to make lies, falſhoods, and forgeries to appear as if they were truth, and not forgeries?

If ye will judge yourſelves, and repent of theſe things, ye ſhall not be condemned of the Lord; but if ye will go on, to cover and hide this great iniquity, ye ſhall not proſper therein.

As for my particular, I had committed my cauſe to the Lord, and intended to have been wholly ſilent, knowing my innocency will be cleared by him in this particular at the great day, and the love, truth, and uprightneſs wherein I wrote theſe things owned by him.

But in the love of God, and in the ſtillneſs and tenderneſs of my ſpirit, I was moved by him to write what follows. And oh! that it would pleaſe the Lord to make it ſerviceable even to T. H. himſelf, for his good.

THE

Fleſh and Blood of Chriſt, &c.

IN the ſecond part of Thomas Hicks's *Dialogues*, called *Continuation*, p. 4. he maketh his perſonated Quaker ſpeak thus; *Thou ſayeſt, we account the blood of Chriſt no more than a common thing; yea, no more than the blood of a common thief.* To which he makes his perſonated Chriſtian anſwer thus: *Iſaac Penington (who I ſuppoſe is an approved Quaker) aſks this queſtion; Can outward blood cleanſe? Therefore ſaith he, we muſt enquire, whether it was the blood of the veil, that is, of the human nature, or the blood within the veil, viz. of that ſpiritual man, conſiſting of fleſh, blood, and bones, which took on him the veil, or human nature. It is not the blood of the veil; that is but outward; and can outward blood cleanſe?*

Now to ſatisfy any that deſire to underſtand the truth as it is, and to know what the intent of my heart and words (as ſpoken by me) was, I ſhall firſt ſay ſomewhat to his ſtating the queſtion, and then open my heart nakedly and plainly, as it then was, and ſtill is, in this matter.

Firſt, I anſwer, theſe were not my words, which he hath ſet down as mine; but words of his own patching up, partly out of ſeveral queries of mine, and partly out of his own conceivings upon my queries, as if he intended to make me appear both ridiculous and wicked at once. For I no where ſay, or affirm, or did ever believe, that Chriſt is a ſpiritual man, conſiſting of fleſh, blood, and bones, which took on him

him the veil of human nature. Thus he repreſents me as ridiculous. It is true, Chriſt inwardly, or as to his inward being, was a Spirit, or God bleſſed for ever, manifeſted in fleſh; which (to ſpeak properly) cannot have fleſh, blood, and bones, as man hath. And then, beſides his alterations at the beginning, putting in only four words of my query, and leaving out that which next follows, (which might have manifeſted my drift and intent in them) he puts in an affirmation which was not mine, in theſe his own words: *It is not the blood of the veil; that is but outward;* and then annexeth to this affirmation of his own, the words of my former query, *Can outward blood cleanſe?* As if theſe words of mine *(Can outward blood cleanſe?)* did neceſſarily infer that the blood of Chriſt is but a common thing.

Herein he repreſents me wicked, and makes me ſpeak, by his changing and adding, that which never was in my heart, and the contrary whereto I have ſeveral times affirmed in that very book where thoſe ſeveral queries were put (out of which he forms this his own query, giving it forth in my name). For in the 10th page of that book, beginning at line 3, I poſitively affirm thus: that *Chriſt did offer up the fleſh and blood of that body* (though not only ſo, for he poured out his ſoul, he poured out his life) a ſacrifice or offering for ſin, *a ſacrifice unto the Father, and in it taſted death for every man; and that it is upon conſideration (and through God's acceptance of this ſacrifice for ſin) that the ſins of believers are pardoned, that God might be juſt, and the juſtifier of him who believeth in Jeſus, or who is of the faith of Jeſus.* Is this common fleſh and blood? Can this be affirmed of common fleſh and blood? Ought not he to have conſidered this, and other paſſages in my book of the ſame tendency, and not thus have reproached me, and miſrepreſented me to the world. Is this a Chriſtian ſpirit; or according to the law or prophets, or Chriſt's doctrine? Doth he herein do as he would be done by? Oh! that he had a heart to conſider it! I might alſo except againſt thoſe words: *human nature,* (which he twice

putteth in) being not my words, nor indeed my ſenſe; for by human nature, as I judge, is underſtood more than the body: whereas I, by the word veil, intended no more than the fleſh, (or outward body) which in ſcripture is expreſsly ſo called, Heb. x. 20. *through the veil, that is to ſay, his fleſh.*

Secondly, I cannot but take notice of this, that he hath not cited the place, page, or pages; nay, not ſo much as named the book, where thoſe words or ſayings which he attributeth to me are written; whereby any perſons that are not willing to take things upon bare report, (eſpecially in ſo deep charges, reflecting not only upon one perſon, but a whole people) might conſult the place, and ſee whether they were my words or no; and whether the queries I did put (indeed to the hearts of people) had any ſuch drift or no, and might compare the words (if they were mine) both with what went before, and alſo followed after; and with what was ſaid in ſeveral other places of the book, which ſpeak of Chriſt's fleſh and blood as of no common thing, but as that which God makes uſe of toward the redemption of mankind.

Thirdly, The drift of all thoſe queries in that book was not to vilify the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, by repreſenting it as a common or uſeleſs thing, but to bring people from ſticking in the outward, to a ſenſe of the inward myſtery; without which inward ſenſe and feeling, the magnifying and crying up the outward doth not avail. Indeed, at that time, I was in a great exerciſe concerning profeſſors: love was deeply working in my heart; and I was in a very tender frame of ſpirit towards them, as any may perceive, who, in the fear of God, and in meekneſs of ſpirit, ſhall read that book (it is entitled, *A Queſtion to the Profeſſors of Chriſtianity, whether they have the true, living, powerful, ſaving knowledge of Chriſt, or no, &c.)* And in this tender frame, in the midſt of my crying to God for them, thoſe queries, from a true ſenſe and underſtanding, ſprang up in my heart, even to neceſſitate them, if poſſible, to ſome ſenſe of the myſtery, which

which there is an abſolute neceſſity of unto true Chriſtianity and ſalvation. This was the very intent of my heart in the ſeveral queries, which generally ſpeak of one and the ſame thing, under ſeveral metaphors and figures. And that this was my intent, theſe words following, in the ſecond page of my preface to that book, do plainly expreſs; the words are theſe: *Now to draw mens minds to a ſenſe of truth, to a ſenſe of that which is the thing, that they might know the bread indeed, that they might know the living waters, come to them and drink thereof, and find Chriſt in them a well of water ſpringing up to eternal life; therefore was it in my heart to give forth this queſtion and the enſuing queries, which he that rightly anſwers, muſt know the thing; and he that doth not know the thing, by his inability to anſwer, may find that he doth not, and ſo may wait upon God, that he may receive the knowledge of it, and come to it, for the eternal life which it freely giveth.*

And that I did mean the myſtery, when I ſpake of bread, water, the wine, the live coal from the altar, the leaves of the tree of life, the putting on Chriſt, the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, &c. is very plain to him that reads ſingly. But to make it manifeſt, particularly concerning the fleſh and blood of Chriſt, I ſhall recite one query; it is the 33d query, page 29. The query is thus: *Is not the true church fleſh of Chriſt's fleſh, and bone of his bone? Is not the falſe or antichriſtian church fleſh of Antichriſt's fleſh, and bone of Antichriſt's bone? What is the fleſh of the ſpiritual whore, which is to be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Shall ever the church, which is of Chriſt's fleſh, be ſtripped naked and burnt with fire? Nay, doth not his fleſh make able to abide the devouring fire, and to dwell with the everlaſting burnings?* Can this poſſibly be underſtood of outward fleſh and bone? Is it not manifeſtly intended of fleſh and bone in the myſtery? Yea, that it did relate to the myſtery, in that very query, out of which he takes the four firſt words, and no more, is very manifeſt by the following words of the ſame query. It is the 17th query, page 25. The query runs thus: *Can outward blood cleanſe*

cleanſe the conſcience? Ye that are ſpiritual, conſider; can outward water waſh the ſoul clean? Ye that have ever felt the blood of ſprinkling from the Lord upon your conſciences, and your conſciences cleanſed thereby, did ye ever feel it to be outward? It is one thing what a man apprehends (in the way of notion) from the letter concerning the things of God, and another thing what a man feels in Spirit. Is it not manifeſt, by the expreſs words themſelves, that I ſpake of the inward feeling of the blood in the myſtery?

Fourthly, This query, *Can outward blood cleanſe the conſcience*, &c. doth not neceſſarily, nor indeed at all infer, that the blood of Chriſt, as to the outward, was but a common thing, or uſeleſs. If I had been to anſwer this query myſelf, he doth not know what my anſwer would have been. It was put to the profeſſors to anſwer inwardly in their hearts, who I did believe, upon ſerious conſideration, could not but confeſs, in way of anſwer thereto, that outward blood itſelf (or of itſelf) could not cleanſe and purge away the filth that was inward; but that muſt be done by that which is inward, living, and ſpiritual. Then hereby they had been brought to ſee the neceſſity of the myſtery, the Spirit, the power, the life of the Son, to be inwardly revealed in them; and then I had obtained my end. Nor was I their enemy in deſiring or aiming at this for them, or in ſetting queries before them, which to my eye (as in the ſight of God) ſeemed proper and conducible in themſelves (however they might fail as to them) towards the obtaining of this end. And if they could once come to this, to own the fleſh and blood in the myſtery, and ſo come to partake of its cleanſing and nouriſhing virtue, and not fix and appropriate that to the outward which chiefly belongs to the myſtery; I ſay, if they could but go thus far with me, in owning the inward life and power in the ſenſible feeling and operation thereof, I could meet them a great way in ſpeaking glorious things of, and attributing a cleanſing or waſhing virtue to the outward, in, and through, and with the inward. For I do

do not ſeparate the inward and outward in my own mind; but the Lord opened my heart, and taught me thus to diſtinguiſh, according to the ſcriptures, in love to them, and for their ſakes. For that was not my intent to deny the outward, or make it appear as a common or uſeleſs thing. There was never ſuch a ſenſe in my heart, nor was ever word written or ſpoken by me to that end; which, to make more manifeſt, I ſhall now plainly open my heart, how it hath been, and is ſtill with me in this reſpect, ſince it pleaſed the Lord and Father of mercies to reveal the myſtery of himſelf and of his Son in me.

In the firſt place, I freely confeſs, that I do own and acknowledge, as in God's ſight, OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, HIS FLESH AND BLOOD IN THE MYSTERY. The apoſtle Paul ſpeaks of the myſtery of God, and of the Father, and of Chriſt, Coloſſ. ii. 2. The Son was revealed in him, Gal. i. 16. and ſo he knew the myſtery of Chriſt, and preached the myſtery of Chriſt, Coloſſ. iv. 3. He was made an able miniſter of the new covenant, not of the letter, but of the Spirit or myſtery; and ſo he preached the wiſdom of God in the myſtery or Spirit, 1 Cor. ii. 7. 2 Cor. iii. 6. Coloſſ. i. 25, 26, 27. and he had great conflict to bring people to the rich knowledge and acknowledgment of the myſtery, chap. ii. 1, 2. He was ſent to turn men from darkneſs, and from the power of Satan (which is a myſtery, and works in mens hearts in a myſtery) to the light, to the Spirit and power of God, which is a myſtery alſo; and remiſſion of ſins is received in and through this myſtery, Acts xxvi. 18. And I deſire every ſerious and tender heart to conſider, whether this knowledge of Chriſt in the myſtery, was not that which he called the excellency of the knowledge of Jeſus Chriſt his Lord, Phil. iii. 8. Certain I am, that the knowledge of God and Chriſt in the myſtery, is the moſt excellent knowledge, and no leſs than life eternal, inwardly revealed and felt from God in the heart. And here no legal righteouſneſs, no ſelf-righteouſneſs can ſtand; but the virtue and power of

of Chriſt's death and reſurrection, inwardly revealed and felt in the myſtery, ſubdues and deſtroys it all. Indeed ſelf-righteouſneſs may be given up in the way of notion, or ſeemingly deſtroyed as to mens apprehenſions, without the revealing or working of the myſtery; but it cannot be deſtroyed in reality but where this is felt: but where the myſtery is known, is received, and thoroughly works, ſelf-righteouſneſs can have no place there. Now the apoſtle, who was acquainted with the myſtery of Chriſt, he ſpeaks of his body, fleſh, and bones, in the myſtery, Eph. v. 30. (and if there be fleſh and bones in the myſtery, is there not alſo blood in the myſtery?) yea, the apoſtle John ſpeaks of the Spirit, water, and blood, 1 John v. 8. Now conſider ſeriouſly, are all theſe of one and the ſame nature? or are they of a different nature? the Spirit of one nature, and the water and blood of another nature? Bleſſed be the Lord, the birth which is born of the Spirit, and is ſpiritual, knoweth the nature of the Spirit which begat it, and knoweth water which is inward and heavenly, and blood which is not at all of an inferior nature to it: and Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord and teacher, ſpeaketh of fleſh which came down from heaven, which fleſh is the bread of life, which he that lives, feeds upon, and none can feed upon but they that live. And by this it is manifeſt (to all to whom God hath given underſtanding in the myſtery) that his fleſh and blood in the myſtery is intended by him, in that he ſaith, "He that eateth "my fleſh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, "and I in him," John vi. 56. This dwelling in each other is an effect of the myſtery, and is witneſſed by none that know not the myſtery. And to this effect Chriſt himſelf expreſsly expoundeth it, ver. 63. "It "is the Spirit that quickeneth, the fleſh profiteth "nothing: the words that I ſpeak to you, they are "Spirit, and they are life." As if he had ſaid, I am ſpeaking of the ſoul's food; I am ſpeaking of the heavenly bread; I am ſpeaking of Spirit and life; I am ſpeaking of the myſtery, which ye look upon and underſtand

underſtand as outwardly intended by me, and ſo miſs of the myſtery of the Spirit, wherein is the quickening virtue, and look only at the outward body or fleſh, which, without the Spirit, profiteth not, nor ever can profit man.

Secondly, I confeſs further, that I have the ſenſe, experience, and knowledge of this alſo, that in the myſtery is the quickening virtue, the cleanſing virtue, the nouriſhing virtue, unto life eternal. The Spirit, the water, the blood inwardly ſprinkled, inwardly poured by God upon the ſoul, inwardly felt and drunk in by the thirſty earth, do cleanſe, do feed, do nouriſh, do refreſh. Doth not God promiſe to ſprinkle clean water upon his Iſrael in the new covenant, and they ſhall be clean? and to pour water on him that is thirſty, and floods upon the dry grounds? Is it not by the ſpirit of judgment and burning, that God waſheth away the filth of the daughter of Sion, &c. Iſai. iv. 4. Doth not the live coal from the altar purify and take away the iniquity? Iſai. vi. Oh! read inwardly! Oh! wait to be taught of God to read inwardly, that ye may know what theſe things mean! Why ſhould ye quarrel at the precious and tender openings of truth, in love to your ſouls?

Thirdly, I have likewiſe this ſenſe, and have alſo had this knowledge and experience, that the outward without this cannot avail. A man is not cleanſed by notions or apprehenſions concerning the thing, but by the thing itſelf. Let a man believe what he can concerning the blood of Chriſt, and apply to himſelf what promiſes he can, yet this will not do, (Oh! how grievouſly do men miſtake herein!) but he muſt feel ſomewhat from God, ſomewhat of the new creation in Chriſt Jeſus, ſomewhat of his light, (ſhining from him the Son into the heart) ſomewhat of his life, ſomewhat of his power, working againſt the darkneſs and power of the enemy in him. Now a man being turned to this, joined to this, gathered to this ſtandard of the Lord, tranſlated in ſome degree out of himſelf into this; here ſomewhat of the myſtery is revealed, and found

found working in him; and ſo far he is of God, and hath ſome true underſtanding from him. And here alſo he hath right to Chriſt's fleſh and blood in the outward, and to all the benefits and precious effects that come thereby. For by owning the myſtery, and receiving the myſtery, we are not taught of God to deny any thing of the outward fleſh and blood, or of his obedience and ſufferings in the fleſh, but rather are taught and enabled there rightly to underſtand it, and to reap the benefits and precious fruits of it.

Fourthly, The Lord hath ſhewn me this alſo, very manifeſtly and clearly, that in former times, (in this nation as well as elſewhere) before profeſſors ran ſo into heaps, (I mean, into ſeveral ways and forms of church-fellowſhip ſo called) they had more inward ſenſe of the myſtery than now they have; and were a great deal more tender (both unto the Lord, and one towards another) than now they are. For then grace in the heart, and the inward feeling, was the thing that was moſt minded among the ſtricter ſort. They did mind ſo much bare reading, or hearing, or praying, or any outward obſervation whatſoever, as what they felt therein. Let men have ſpoken ever ſo many glorious words concerning the things of God; yet, if they had not been ſpoken warmly and freſhly by him that ſpoke them, there was little ſatisfaction to the ſoul that hungered after that which was living, but rather an inward grief and diſſatisfaction felt: ſo that in that day there was an inward ſenſe of the myſtery, (though not a diſtinct knowledge of it) which was precious in the eye of God, and very ſavoury inwardly in the heart. But now, in ſo long time, by looking ſo much outward, and beating their brains, and diſputing about the outward, many have very much (if not wholly) loſt the ſenſe of the inward, and are found contending for the outward, againſt the very appearance and manifeſtation of the inward; and ſo are in danger of being hardened and ſealed up in that which is dead and literal, out of the limits of that which is living and ſpiritual. It is a dreadful thing to fight againſt

againſt the living God, and his living appearance in the hearts of thoſe whom he chooſeth, in any age or generation. The Lord hath been pleaſed to bring us (a poor deſpiſed remnant) back to that which firſt gave us life, in the days of our former profeſſion. Oh! that ye were brought thither alſo, that that might remove the veil, hardneſs, darkneſs, and deep prejudices from you; which can never be removed while ye ſtick in literal apprehenſions, without the light and teachings of God's Spirit! Now as touching the outward, which ye ſay we deny, becauſe of our teſtimony to the inward, I have frequently given a moſt ſolemn teſtimony thereto; and God knoweth it to be the truth of my heart; and that the teſtifying to the inward (from which the outward came) doth not make the outward void, but rather eſtabliſh it in its place and ſervice. God himſelf, who knew what virtue was in the inward, yet hath pleaſed to make uſe of the outward; and who may contradict or ſlight his wiſdom and counſel therein? Glorious was the appearance and manifeſtation of his Son in fleſh; precious his ſubjection and holy obedience to his Father; his giving himſelf up to death for ſinners was of great eſteem in his eye! It was a ſpotleſs ſacrifice of great value, and effectual for the remiſſion of ſins: and I do acknowledge humbly unto the Lord the remiſſion of my ſins thereby, and bleſs the Lord for it; even for giving up his Son to death for us all, and giving all that believe in his name and power to partake of remiſſion through him.

And ſeeing it is thus with me: ſeeing the root of the matter is in me, Oh! how can any man, that hopes to be redeemed by my Lord and Saviour, reproach me for ſpeaking of the myſtery, without the leaſt derogation to the outward, or what was done by him in the outward! But if I ſhould ſpeak vehemently concerning mens neglecting the myſtery, and ſetting up that which is outward inſtead of it and without it, I ſhould not be condemned, but juſtified of the Lord in ſo doing. Indeed there is a great and weighty

weighty charge from God's Spirit upon the profeſſors of this age, for departing from the inward, (I mean that ſweet ſenſe, which, in ſome meaſure, God gave them in former times of the inward) and magnifying and ſtriving to eſtabliſh that which they apprehend concerning the outward, without it, and againſt it. Oh! that it were otherwiſe with them, that God may not have this charge to manage againſt them, when at the great day they are to appear before him, and be judged by him! When all that have ſlighted or ſpoken contemptuouſly of his Son's appearance in fleſh, and have not come to a ſenſe thereof, and repentance for it, ſhall be condemned; and they that have ſlighted or ſpoken contemptuouſly of his appearance in Spirit, ſhall not be juſtified: which appearance is now made manifeſt in the hearts of many, bleſſed be the Lord for it! Oh! what cries have been in my heart many years concerning you, O ye profeſſors of all ſorts who have had any tenderneſs towards the Lord! that ye might ſee and know the Lord Chriſt; and confeſs him in Spirit, in the myſtery, even in his inward appearance in the heart, and might feel his redeeming power and virtue there, and ſo be brought into union and fellowſhip with him!

The CONCLUSION of the FIRST PART.

THERE is a precious promiſe of God's making a feaſt of fat things on his holy mountain, and of deſtroying there the face of the covering, caſt over all people, and the veil that is ſpread over all nations, Iſaiah xxv. 6, 7. Now, what is this mountain? Was there not a Mount Sion under the law, which was figurative? and is there not a Mount Sion under the goſpel, which is the ſubſtance of that figure? and did not the Chriſtians in the apoſtles days, who were called of God and ſanctified, come to this Mount Sion,

Sion, and the city of the living God, the heavenly Jeruſalem, where they had fellowſhip with God the Judge of all, and with Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant, &c.? Heb. xii. 22, 24. And was not the veil here done away in him who was their Lord, their light, their life, their ſtrength, their ſun of righteouſneſs, their bright and morning ſtar? ſo that with open face they could behold the glory of the Lord, and were changed thereby into his heavenly image, from glory to glory, 2 Cor. iii. 18.

But alas! how hath that life, Spirit, and power been loſt, ſince the days of the apoſtles! Men have ſtill owned the apoſtles words, and formed many notions and apprehenſions out of the letter, but loſt the apoſtle's ſpirit, loſt the knowledge of the holy mountain, where the veil is taken away, and where the feaſt of fat things is made; and ſo are only dreaming about eating and drinking ſpiritually, but know not what it is to feed on the living ſubſtance. And ſo (being ignorant of that) the veil is over their hearts while they read the prophets words, and Chriſt's and his apoſtles words; and the myſtery of life, and of the redeeming power, is hid from their eyes: and that which God intended to them for a table, is become their ſnare (as it was with the Jews); and their back is ſo bowed down under the loads and burdens of the enemy, that they cannot ſo much as hope or believe in the power of life for redemption therefrom, but conclude it muſt neceſſarily be ſo with them all their days.

Oh! where's the faith that gives victory over the enemies? Where's the ability in the faith, ſo to reſiſt him as to make him fly? Where's Satan's falling like lightning? (Oh! his ſtrength before the power of the Lord is but a flaſh!) and the God of peace his treading him under the feet of his ſaints? Oh! where's that truth, or that knowledge of the Son, which makes free from him? (John viii. 32, 36.) Where's that Spirit wherein liberty from his power and ſnares is felt? 2 Cor. iii. 17. Where's living in the Spirit,

and walking in the Spirit, and in the pure light of the Lord, where he cannot come? Where's reading of the ſcriptures in that which gives to witneſs them, and which fulfils them in the heart?

Oh! the myſtery of godlineſs, the power of godlineſs, where the life is revealed, and the veil taken away, and an underſtanding given, opened, and kept open, to read and underſtand the ſcriptures aright; yea, and the hidden glory alſo! Where it cannot be ſaid in truth to thoſe that are there, Ye know not the ſcriptures, nor the power of God; but ye have received power to become ſons of God, and ye are in him that is true; who truly opens the ſcriptures in your hearts, and gives you the enjoyment, inheritance, and poſſeſſion of the precious promiſes, whereby ye are made partakers of the divine nature, and live in him who is the head and ſpring of that nature. Oh! that people that profeſs Chriſt were here! Oh! that they did know him who begets! and then they would not be ſo ignorant of thoſe that are begotten by him; but would come into the true faith, into the true love, into the true knowledge and obedience of him, whom God hath appointed to guide and govern, and build up the whole living body. The Lord guide me inwardly thither, where the myſtery is revealed, and the fellowſhip with God, and his Son and ſaints, held in the myſtery! For our fellowſhip is not in a notional knowledge concerning Chriſt, but in the life itſelf; which the Lord God gather his people more and more into, and build them more and more up in. Amen.

A BRIEF

A BRIEF ACCOUNT CONCERNING The PEOPLE called QUAKERS, IN Reference both to PRINCIPLE and DOCTRINE.

We are a People of GOD's gathering, who (many of us) had long waited for his Appearance, and had undergone great Diſtreſs for Want thereof.

Queſt. *BUT ſome may ſay, What appearance of the great God and Saviour did ye want?*

Anſ. We wanted the preſence and power of his Spirit to be inwardly manifeſted in our ſpirits. We had (as I may ſay) what we could gather from the letter, and endeavoured to practiſe what we could read in the letter; but we wanted the power from on high, we wanted life, we wanted the preſence and fellowſhip of our beloved; we wanted the knowledge of the heavenly ſeed and kingdom, and an entrance into it, and the holy dominion and reign of the Lord of life over the fleſh, over ſin and death in us.

Queſt. *How did God appear to you?*

Anſ. The Sun of righteouſnéſs did ariſe in us, the day-ſpring from on high, the morning-ſtar did viſit

us, insomuch that we did as really see and feel the light and brightness of the inward day in our spirits, as ever we felt the darkness of the inward night.

Quest. *How did God gather you?*

Ans. By the voice of his Son, by the arm of his Son, by the virtue of his Son's light and life inwardly revealed and working in our hearts. This loosed us inwardly from the darkness, from the bonds of sin and iniquity, from the power of the captiver and destroyer, and turned our minds inwardly towards our Lord and Saviour, to mind his inward appearance, his inward shinings, his inward quickenings; all which were fresh from God, and full of virtue. And as we came to be sensible of them, join to them, receive and give up to them, we came to partake of their virtue, and to witness the rescuing and redeeming of our souls thereby. So that by hearing the Son's voice, and following him, we came to find him the way to the Father, and to be gathered home by him to the Father's house, where is bread enough, and mansions of rest and peace for all the children of the Most High.

Now as touching the blessed principle of truth, which we have had experience of, and testify to, (for how can we conceal so rich a treasure, and be faithful to God, or bear true good-will to men!) it is no new thing in itself, though of late more clearly revealed, and the minds of men more clearly directed and guided to it than in former ages. It is no other than that which Christ himself abundantly preached, who preached the kingdom, who preached the truth which makes free, and that under many parables and resemblances; sometimes of a little seed, sometimes of a pearl or hid treasure, sometimes of a leaven or salt, sometimes of a lost piece of silver, &c. Now what is this, and where is this to be found? What is this which is like a little seed, a pearl, &c. and where is it to be found? What is the field? Is it not the world, and is not the world set in man's heart? What is the house which is to be swept, and the candle lighted

lighted in? Is it not that houſe, or heart, where the many enemies are? A man's enemies, ſaith Chriſt, are thoſe of his own houſe. Indeed the teſtimony concerning this was precious to us; but the finding and experiencing the thing teſtified of to be according to the teſtimony, was much more. And this we ſay in perfect truth of heart, and in moſt tender love to the ſouls of people, that whoever tries, ſhall find this little thing, this little ſeed of the kingdom, to be a kingdom, to be a pearl, to be heavenly treaſure, to be the leaven of life, leavening the heart with life, and with the moſt precious oil and ointment of healing and ſalvation. So that we teſtify to no new thing, but to the truth and grace which was from the beginning; which was always in Jeſus Chriſt, our Lord and Saviour, and diſpenſed by him in all ages and generations, whereby he quickened, renewed, and changed the heart of the true believers in his inward and ſpiritual appearance in them, thereby deſtroying the enemies of his own houſe, and ſaving them from them. For indeed there is no ſaving the creature, without deſtroying that in the creature, which brings ſpiritual death and deſtruction upon it. Iſrael of old was ſaved by the deſtroying of their outward enemies; and Iſrael now (the new Iſrael, the inward Iſrael) is ſaved by the deſtruction of their inward enemies. Oh! that people could come out of their own wiſdom, and wait for God's wiſdom, that in it they might come to ſee the glory, the excellency, the exceeding rich virtue and treaſure of life, that are wrapped up in this principle or ſeed of life; and ſo might receive it, give up to it, and come to partake thereof.

And as touching doctrines, we have no new doctrines to hold forth. The doctrines held forth in the holy ſcriptures are the doctrines that we believe. And this doth farther ſeal to us our belief of this principle, becauſe we find it a key by which God openeth the ſcriptures to us, and giveth us the living ſenſe and evidence of them in our hearts. We ſee, and have felt in it to whom the curſe and wrath belongs; and

to whom the love, mercy, peace, bleſſings, and precious promiſes belong; and have been led by God's Holy Spirit and power through the judgments to the mercy, and to the partaking of the precious promiſes. So that what ſhould we publiſh any new faith, or any new doctrines for? Indeed we have none to publiſh; but all our aim is to bring men to the ancient principle of truth, and to the right underſtanding and practice of the ancient apoſtolick doctrine and holy faith once delivered to the ſaints. Head-notions do but cauſe diſputes; but heart-knowledge, heart-experience, ſenſe of the living power of God inwardly, the evidence and demonſtration of his Spirit in the inward parts, puts an end to diſputes, and puts men upon the inward travel and exerciſe of ſpirit by that which is new and living, which avails with God. Now whereas many are offended at us, becauſe we do not more preach doctrinal points, or the hiſtory of Chriſt, as touching his death, reſurrection, aſcenſion, &c.; but our declaration and teſtimony is chiefly concerning a principle to direct and guide mens minds thereto; to give a plain account of this thing, as it pleaſeth the Lord to open my heart at this time in love and good-will to ſatisfy and remove prejudices where it may be; thus it is in brief,

Firſt, That which God hath given us the experience of, (after our great loſs in the literal knowledge of things) and that which he hath given us to teſtify of, is the myſtery, the hidden life, the inward and ſpiritual appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, revealing his power inwardly, deſtroying enemies inwardly, and working his work inwardly in the heart. Oh! this was the joyful ſound to our ſouls, even the tidings of the ariſing of that inward life and power which could do this! Now this ſpiritual appearance of his was after his appearance in the fleſh, and is the ſtanding and laſting diſpenſation of the goſpel, even the appearance of Chriſt in his Spirit and power inwardly in the hearts of his. So that in minding this, and being faithful in this reſpect, we mind our peculiar

liar work, and are faithful in that which God hath peculiarly called us to, and requireth of us.

Secondly, There is not that need of publiſhing the other as formerly was. The hiſtorical relation concerning Chriſt is generally believed and received by all ſorts that pretend to Chriſtianity. His death, his miracles, his riſing, his aſcending, his interceding, &c. is generally believed by all people; but the myſtery they miſs of, the hidden life they are not acquainted with, but alienated from the life of God, in the midſt of their literal owning and acknowledging of theſe things.

Thirdly, The knowledge of theſe, without the knowledge of the myſtery, is not ſufficient to bring them unto God; for many ſet up that which they gather and comprehend from the relation concerning the thing, inſtead of the thing itſelf, and ſo never come to a ſenſe of their need of the thing itſelf, nay, not ſo far as rightly to ſeek after it. And ſo many are builders, and many are built up very high in religion, in a way of notion and practice, without acquaintance with the rock of ages, without the true knowledge and underſtanding of the foundation and corner-ſtone. My meaning is, they have a notion of Chriſt to be the rock, a notion of him to be the foundation-ſtone; but never come livingly to feel him the rock, to feel him the foundation-ſtone, inwardly laid in their hearts, and themſelves made living ſtones in him, and built upon him, the main and fundamental ſtone. Where is this to be felt but within? And they that feel this within, do they not feel Chriſt within? And can any that feel him within, deny him to be within the ſtrength of life, the hope of glory? Well, it is true once again, (ſpiritually now, as well as formerly literally) "the ſtone which the builders refuſed" (Chriſt within, the builders of this age refuſe) "is become "the head of the corner," who knits together his ſanctified body, his living body, the church, in this our day, more glorioufly than in the former ages and generations, bleſſed be the name of our God.

Fourthly, The myſtery, the hidden life, the appearance of Chriſt in Spirit, comprehends the other: and the other is not loſt or denied, but found in it, and there diſcerned or acknowledged more clearly and abundantly. It was to be after it, and comprehends that which went before it. Paul did not loſe any thing of the excellent knowledge of Chriſt, when he ſaid, "Henceforth know we no man after the fleſh; "yea, though we have known Chriſt after the fleſh, "yet henceforth know we him no more." If he did not know Chriſt after the fleſh, how did he know him? Why as the Father inwardly revealed him. He knew him in his Spirit and power. He knew his death inwardly, he knew his reſurrection inwardly, he knew the Spirit, the virtue, the power of it inwardly; he knew the thing in the myſtery in his own heart. Oh! precious knowledge! Oh! the excellency of this knowledge of my Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt! What is the outwardly moſt exact literal knowledge without this? But what then? Do I now deny or ſlight the outward? No; I have it here, and I have the inward feeling of the Spirit of life, how it dwelt in him, how it wrought in him, and of what wonderful value all his actions and obedience were, in and through the virtue of this Spirit. Was Abraham's offering his ſon ſo precious in God's eye? Oh! then what is this! Never was ſuch a body ſo ſanctified, ſo prepared; never ſuch a ſacrifice offered. Oh! the infinite worth and value of it! For by the inward life and teachings of God's Spirit am I taught and made able to value that glorious outward appearance and manifeſtation of the life and power of God in that heavenly fleſh, (as in my heart I have often called it) for the life ſo to dwell in it, that it was even one with it. Yet ſtill it was a veil, and the myſtery was the thing; and the eye of life looks through the veil into the myſtery, and paſſes through it, as I may ſay, as to the outward, that it may behold its glory in the inward. And here the fleſh of Chriſt, the veil, is not loſt, but is found and known in its glory in the inward. Be not offended at me,

O tender-

O tender-hearted reader! for I write in love things true, according to the inward feeling and demonſtration of God's Spirit, though not eaſy perhaps to be underſtood at preſent by thee; but in due time the Lord can make them manifeſt to thee, if thou in uprightneſs and tenderneſs of heart, and in the ſilence of the fleſhly part, wait upon him.

A few WORDS concerning the WAY of PEACE.

"The way of peace they have not known," Rom. iii. 17.

THERE is a way of peace, of true peace with God, who is an adverſary to all that is unholy and unrighteous. Thoſe who have been unholy and unrighteous, who have been awakened, troubled, and could find no reſt, but the ſevere and righteous judgments and wrath of the Lord lying upon their ſpirits night and day, having at length had their ears opened by him, and being led by him out of the unholy and unrighteous way, into the holy and righteous way, have felt both life and peace therein.

Now there are two ſorts which the apoſtle here mentions, (or two ſtates, which the apoſtle here ſpeaks of) which have not known, nor can know, the way of peace with God, who is an adverſary to them both, and will one day ſpeak trouble to them both, when their ſouls and conſciences come to be ſearched and judged by him.

The one is the profane, or Gentile ſtate, which is without the ſenſe of God, not heeding any appearance of his, or any inward voice of his Spirit, or the writing of his law upon their heart. Theſe never knew the way wherein the heart is inwardly and ſpiritually circum-

circumciſed and renewed, ſin forgiven, and peace obtained.

The other is the profeſſing or outward Jews ſtate, who may ſtudy the letter, and apply themſelves to conform outwardly to the letter, but never were acquainted with the inward Spirit and power. Theſe greatly differ from the Gentile or profane ſtate, both in outward appearance, and in their own eye; but are the ſame in the ground with the Gentiles, and know no more of the way of peace than the other do.

Queſt. *But what is the way of peace, which neither the profane, nor any ſort of profeſſors out of the life and power, ever knew, or can know?*

Anſ. It is an inward way, a way for the inward Jews, for the inwardly-renewed and circumciſed to walk in. It is an holy or ſanctified way, for the ſanctified ones to walk in. It is a living way, which none but the living can find. It is a new way, which none but thoſe to whom God hath given the new eye can ſee. It is a way that God prepares and caſts up, and leads mens ſpirits into, (who hearken unto him) and guides the feet of his ſaints in. It is a ſtrait and narrow way, which no luſt of the fleſh, nor wiſdom of the fleſh can find out, or enter into. Oh! how little, how low, how poor, how empty, how naked, muſt he be, that enters into this way, and walks therein! Many may ſeek after it, and may think to find it, and walk in it; but few ſhall be able, as our Lord Chriſt ſaid. Here circumciſion outward avails not; here want of that circumciſion hinders not; here bodily exerciſe profits little. The new creature is all here; the croſs of Chriſt is all here; the power of God is all here; and he that walks according to this rule, peace is upon him, and the whole Iſrael of God. But he that knows not this rule, nor walks according to this rule, peace is not upon him, nor is he one of the inward Iſrael of God, who receive power to become ſons, who receive the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, which is the inward rule of the inward Iſrael.

This

This was the way of peace from the beginning; this is the way of peace ſtill; and there is not another. To be new created in Chriſt Jeſus, to be ingrafted into him, to abide in him, to have the circumciſion of the fleſh (the body of the ſins of the fleſh cut off) by the circumciſion of Chriſt, (made inwardly in the heart without hands) and to walk not after the fleſh, but after the Spirit, even in the newneſs of the Spirit, here is life and peace, reſt and joy for evermore. The Lord of his tender mercy give me a ſenſe of it, and lead me into it more and more. Amen.

The Conclusion of the Whole.

THERE is a birth which is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the fleſh, nor of the will of man; but of God, John i. 13. And this birth, which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, chap. iii. 6. Now this birth, which is born of the Spirit, and is Spirit, hath a life and way of knowledge ſuitable to its nature and being; which is very far above man. Its life is in the Spirit, and its walking in the Spirit, and its knowledge is after the way of the Spirit, very far above man's way of conceiving or comprehending. The birth itſelf is a myſtery to man, and its way of knowledge is a way altogether hid from man. It is indeed in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit, in the ſhinings of his light in the heart: "In "thy light ſhall we ſee light." The birth knows what this means. There is a wiſe and prudent part in man, from which God hides the ſight of his kingdom, and the heavenly glory thereof; but there is a babe to which God reveals the myſtery thereof. Fleſh and blood cannot reveal; but the Father can and doth to his children, who is the teacher of them all, from the leaſt to the greateſt, in the new and living covenant.

There

There is man's day, and there is God's day. There is man's day of gathering knowledge, after his fleshly manner of comprehending; and there is God's day of giving knowledge, by the shinings of the light of his own eternal Spirit. In man's day, how doth wise and prudent man beat his brains, and labour in the fire for very vanity! But in God's day, how doth the knowledge of the Lord cover the earth, as the waters cover the sea! When the day-spring from on high visits inwardly, when the Lord lighteth the candle inwardly, oh! how clear is the knowledge of the Lord, and how doth it abound then! Oh! what a difference there is between man's apprehensions and conceivings concerning Christ, and God's revealing him inwardly; and between man's coming to Christ, according to his own apprehensions, and his coming to Christ in the heavenly drawings and teachings of the Father! John vi. 45. Oh! that the begettings of life and the birth thereof were felt in mens hearts, that in it men might know the day of God, and the kingdom of God, and the treasures of wisdom which are hid in Christ, and will ever be so, but as Christ is inwardly revealed and formed in the heart! Many may have notions of Christ being formed in them; ah! but to feel it inwardly! there is the sweetness, there is the assurance, there is the life, there is the peace, there is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and there is the joy of the true Christian for ever. Come, oh! come, all sorts of tender professors, out of yourselves, into God's Spirit, into God's truth, that ye may know what it is to be in the Spirit, and in the truth, and what it is to live there, and to know things there, and to worship there, and to have fellowship with the Father and Son there. The poor receive the gospel, the poor receive the kingdom, the poor receive the power, the poor receive the righteousness and salvation of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ye are too rich in your comprehensions and gathered knowledge from your own literal conceivings, to learn to wait aright, to receive of him his gold, his raiment, and his eye-salve.

What

What pleaſure is it to us to teſtify againſt you? Were it not for obedience to our God, and love to your ſouls, we would never do it. We are content and ſatisfied to be of the little deſpiſed flock, which the Shepherd feeds, giving to every one his proportion of daily nouriſhment, life, peace, righteouſneſs, and joy. It is our love to you that we would not have you lay out your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which will not ſatisfy the truly hungry and awakened ſoul, but might come to feed on ſubſtance, on the life itſelf, on the ſweetneſs and fatneſs of God's houſe, where nothing that any of his children can need or long after is wanting. Oh! that ye had the ſenſe of our love! If ye had the true underſtanding and ſenſe of God's love, ye could not but have a ſenſe of our love alſo; for it comes from him, and it flows towards you in his will and tender movings. Do ye love God? Are your hearts circumciſed to love God? If not, ye do not truly love. And if ye loved him that begets, ye would love them that are begotten by him. Your love is to your own notions and apprehenſions of God, not to his nature; for if ye loved his nature, (that holy, heavenly, ſpiritual nature as it is in him) ye could not but love it in his children alſo. Well, our God is love, and taught us to love even our enemies, and to wreſtle with our God for them, that, if it be poſſible, the Lord may remove the ſcales from their eyes, and give them repentance to the acknowledgment of the truth as it is in Jeſus, where it is more living and powerful, more effectual and operative (inwardly purifying, ſanctifying, yea, and juſtifying alſo) than any but thoſe only that are born of God, (and kept alive by him) yet ever knew, or can know.

POST-

POSTSCRIPT.

Containing a few Words concerning the Doings and Sufferings of that deſpiſed People called QUAKERS, which are both miſunderſtood and miſrepreſented by many: With an Exhortation to true Chriſtianity.

FIRST, their doings are looked upon by many to be from a natural principle, and according to the covenant of works, and not from the free grace and gift of God's Spirit.

Now concerning this I can ſpeak ſomewhat faithfully, as having been long experienced in the principle, and as having had experience of the grace and tender mercy of the Lord from my childhood. And indeed thus it hath been with me from my childhood; whatever hath been done in me, or by me, that was good, I have felt to be from God's grace and mercy to me, and have cried grace, grace, mercy, mercy, to the Lord continually therefore. And when I was turned to his truth in the inward parts, I found it was God's grace and tender love to me to turn me to it, and to preſerve me, being turned; and to cauſe it to ſpring in me day by day, and to give me ability through it. Ah! none knows but they that have had experience how we have been weakened in the natural part; how poor we have been made, that we might receive the goſpel, and how poor in ourſelves we are kept, that we might enjoy the riches and inheritance of the kingdom. And this we daily experience, that not by the works of righteouſneſs which we had done, but accord-

according to his mercy, he ſaved us, and doth daily ſave us, by the waſhing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghoſt. Yea, God's writing his law in our hearts, and placing his fear there, and putting his Spirit within us, to enlighten and quicken, and cauſe us to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and to do them, and all the mortifying of ſin, and denying of the luſts of the fleſh, and performing that which is holy and acceptable in the eyes of the Lord (as all that proceeds from his own Holy Spirit is) all that is of the new covenant, and performed by the working thereof, and not by the working of the natural part of itſelf, but by the working of the Spirit of life in the new-birth, and through the natural part as his inſtrument. So let none reproach the works that God brings forth in us, who hath created us anew in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, leſt thereby he reproach the Holy Spirit and power of the living God, in which they are wrought, and by which they are brought forth, and could never be brought forth without it.

Then for our ſufferings, indeed they are gifts we received from God; ſo that we can truly ſay, it is given us by the Lord our God not only to believe in his Son, but to ſuffer for his ſake; and that it is only in good conſcience to God, and by the aſſiſtance of the Lord, that we ſuffer; that the patience and meekneſs wherewith we ſuffer, is not of ourſelves, but of him. Whenever the Lord permits afflictions or ſufferings to come upon us, our eye is to him, and we enter into them in his fear, knowing our own inability to go through them, and looking up to him for ſtrength. And when we are in them, while they continue, we daily look up to him for ſtrength, and have been many times very weak in ourſelves, when immediately, or very ſoon after, we have felt great ſtrength in the Lord. Alſo after our ſufferings, when the Lord hath been with us all along, and brought us through our ſufferings in the peace and joy of his Spirit, we do not look back boaſtingly, as if we had been any thing,

thing, or done any thing as of ourſelves; but we bow before the Lord, and bleſs the Lord, when we conſider how he hath been with us, and how he hath upheld us by the right-hand of his righteouſneſs; and what he hath done for us when we were very poor, weak, afflicted, and often ſorely diſtreſſed. Therefore let none reproach, miſrepreſent, or vilify our ſufferings, which our God hath helped us through, and for which we (in humility of heart) give him thanks, and cannot but do ſo all our days, becauſe the thankful remembrance and ſenſe of them is written by the finger of his Spirit upon our hearts. Oh! all ſorts of people, whom we love and travail for, and uſe our intereſt in the Lord our God for, that ye might be truly ſenſible of your conditions, know the inward appearance and viſits of the Shepherd and Saviour of the ſoul, turn to him, (looking in true faith unto him) and be ſaved! I ſay unto you, in tenderneſs of ſpirit, oh! do not requite us ſo ill for our love and truth of heart towards you, as to caſt untrue and unjuſt reproaches upon us, and to render that truth vile which God hath made honourable, in ſanctifying and redeeming many thereby. Truly our love is from the God of love. We could not ſo love you as we do, if our God had not taught us; nor ſo ſeek after you as we do, in tenderneſs of bowels, if we were not inſtruments in the hand of the Shepherd of Iſrael. And the light we teſtify of, which we feel ſhine in us, it is no leſs than the true ſure light of the Sun of righteouſneſs, which God hath cauſed to ſhine in our hearts; who alſo loveth mankind, and cauſeth it to glance into the darkeſt corners of the earth. And the life we are quickened by out of ſin and tranſgreſſion, and the power we have received to become ſons of God, it is from him who is the fountain of life, and hath all power in heaven and earth. Oh! that ye could receive the bleſſed report! Oh! that the arm of the Lord might be revealed in you! Oh! that ye could feel and witneſs the Saviour working out your ſalvation in you, binding the ſtrong man in you, caſting him out of

of you, with all his goods after him, that the place of the wicked-one might be found no more in you, nor none of his luſts or vain thoughts lodge in your hearts any more; but ye might witneſs and experience the new heart, the clean heart, the pure heart, in which God dwells, and the eye that ſees him that is inviſible. Oh! glory to the Lord for what he hath done in and for a deſpiſed people, (who were no people before the Lord made them one) who hath brought them to Sion, his holy mountain, where he dwells and reigns, and where he builds up his own houſe and temple, which he eſtabliſheth over all; where the ſheep of Iſrael feed, and where the Shepherd of Iſrael reigns and triumphs in glory over the enemies of his kingdom. The little innocent babes taſte ſomewhat of his holy dominion and power, and of his kingdom of peace and righteouſneſs; but in his ancients his light ſhines very brightly, and before them he reigneth glorioufly; ſo that he is praiſed in the very heights of Sion, and his name renowned there over all for ever. Glory, glory to the pure ſpring of life, from whence the living ſtreams come which refreſh the ſouls of the living. Surely his pure praiſes ſhall be ſounded in the hearts of the living for ever and ever. Amen.

An EXHORTATION to true CHRISTIANITY.

It is eaſy to pretend to CHRIST; but to be a true Chriſtian is very precious, and many Tribulations and deep Afflictions are to be paſſed through before it be attained unto, as thoſe who are made ſo by the Lord experience.

NOW everlaſting happineſs and ſalvation depends upon true Chriſtianity. Not upon having the name of a Chriſtian only, or profeſſing ſuch or ſuch Chriſtian doctrines; but upon having the nature of

Chriſtianity, upon being renewed by the Spirit of Chriſt, and receiving the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, and bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit. Oh! here is the Chriſtian indeed! and it ſhould be every one's care not to fall ſhort of this. Now becauſe there is a contention about Chriſtianity, who is the right Chriſtian, it behoves every man to take care as to himſelf that he be really ſuch; that he receive that from God, and be that to God, which none but the right Chriſtian can be, or can receive. This is the uſe I would make of theſe things in my own heart, even to be ſure I be ſuch an one as God hath made, and will accept and own as a Chriſtian. And having had ſome experience of this thing, and truly underſtanding what the Chriſtian ſtate is, and what doth attend it, I ſhall ſet down ſome few things, which he that inwardly knoweth, witneſſeth, and enjoyeth, is without all controverſy a true Chriſtian, whatever man may account of him.

Firſt, He that is a new creature, is without doubt a true Chriſtian. He that is regenerated, he that is renewed in the ſpirit of his mind by Chriſt Jeſus, he that is new-created in the holy and heavenly image, he has felt the power of God's Spirit begetting him anew, forming him anew, out of the old nature and image of the firſt Adam, into the nature and image of the ſecond Adam, who is the quickening Spirit; and that which is begotten and born of him is Spirit.

Secondly, He that is in the new covenant, is a true Chriſtian. He that hath thirſt after the living waters, and hath heard the call to the waters of life, hath heard the voice of him who gives life, and hath received life from him, who giveth life to all that come to him, and who maketh the new and everlaſting covenant with all that hear his voice, take up his croſs and follow him, he is without doubt one of Chriſt's ſheep, whom the Shepherd owneth, and taketh care of.

Thirdly, He that is inwardly circumciſed with the circumciſion made without hands, he is a Jew inward, a Chriſ-

a Christian inward, (in the sight of God) who hath felt the Spirit and power of Christ Jesus, and rejoiceth in Christ Jesus, and is one of those worshippers whom God hath sought out and taught to worship him in the life and Spirit of his Son.

Fourthly, He that is inwardly washed with clean water, with the inward water, he is the inward Jew, the inward Christian. God promised to pour out clean water upon his Israel, and they should be clean. He who hath the clean water poured upon him inwardly, which inwardly washeth and cleanseth, he is without controversy one of God's inward Israel.

Fifthly, He that feeds on the bread of life within, and drinks the water of life out of his own well or cistern, he without doubt is living. He that is invited to the marriage-supper of the Lamb, and comes and sups with the Lamb, he is one of the same nature and spirit with him. He with whom Christ sups, who hath heard Christ knocking at his door, hath opened to him, and received him in, to purify his heart, and dwell in him, and sup with him, and give him to sup with himself; so that he eats bread in the kingdom, and drinks wine in the kingdom, and partakes of the feast of fat things, which God makes to his Israel in his holy mountain, he is without doubt one of Christ's, and partakes of this in and through him.

Sixthly, He that lives the Christian life, who walks not after the flesh, but after the Spirit; who doth not fulfil the lusts of the flesh, but hath the law of God written in his heart, and his fear put within him, and his Holy Spirit given to instruct him, and to guide him to answer the holy law written in his heart, which the carnal mind is not subject to, nor can be subject to, without doubt he is spiritual; without doubt he is a true Christian.

Seventhly, He that lives by faith, who knows the faith which is the gift of God, hath received it, and lives by it; who can do nothing of himself, but only by faith in that holy power which doth all in him; so

that he lives, and believes, and obeys from an holy root of life, which cauſeth life to ſpring up in him, and love to ſpring up in him, and the Lamb's meekneſs and patience to ſpring up in him, and all grace to ſpring up in him; I ſay, he that lives thus, without doubt is ingrafted into the true vine, into the true olive-tree; and the root bears him, and miniſters ſap unto him, and he is a true, freſh, green, living branch of the true vine, of the holy olive-tree.

Many more things might be mentioned, as they are experimentally known and felt amongſt us, who are true Chriſtians; though the Baptiſts and others have repreſented us to the world as if we were no Chriſtians; but that touching us not, their ſaying ſo is no more to us than the profeſſing Jews of the ſame ſpirit, who ſaid Chriſt had a devil. But theſe are to give a taſte; and he that knows and feels theſe, may alſo know and feel the reſt, if ever ſo many more ſhould be mentioned. Now the way to feel theſe, and to become a true Chriſtian, (and to grow up in the Chriſtian life) is to feel the ſeed of the kingdom, which is the beginning of the kingdom, the beginning of true Chriſtianity; and then to feel the ſeed abiding, (the ſeed which is of the Spirit, and which is Spirit) here is the conſtant ſeal of Chriſtianity in my heart; here are true and certain evidences, day by day, of the Chriſtian nature and ſpirit manifeſting themſelves undeniably inwardly.

And now having the witneſs in myſelf, the teſtimony of him that begat life in me, teſtifying to his own work, and to his own birth, of what value are any teſtimonies of men without, againſt this? Chriſtianity is a myſtery, and he only can truly ſee who is Chriſtian indeed, who hath the inward eye opened, and with that inward eye is taught of God to pierce into that wherein Chriſtianity conſiſteth. There have been many Chriſtians of mens making; there are alſo ſome Chriſtians of God's and Chriſt's making; which Chriſtians God and Chriſt will own, but not the other.

Oh!

Oh! let men have a care, that when God cometh to diſtinguiſh between cattle and cattle, (between Chriſtian and Chriſtian) they be found ſuch as God will make up as his jewels, and own as the ſheep of his fold; ſuch as ſhall be able to bear the trial of his ſearching judgment, and pure impartial eye; and not ſuch as ſtill, notwithſtanding all their profeſſion of religion and Chriſtianity, are found workers of iniquity, and ſo not created anew in Chriſt Jeſus unto good works, and therefore not truly of him, nor true Chriſtians in his eye.

TO THE

JEWS NATURAL,

AND TO THE

JEWS SPIRITUAL;

WITH A

Few Words to England, my native Country, &c.

Some ſenſible, weighty QUERIES, concerning ſome Things very ſweet and neceſſary to be experienced in the truly Chriſtian State.

Whereunto is added,

A POSTSCRIPT, containing ſome Queries on Iſaiah l. 10, 11. A Scripture of deep Counſel and Concern to the darkened and diſtreſſed States of ſome among thoſe that fear and obey the Lord.

Whereunto are added,

Two or three Queries touching the River and City of God, and the pure Stillneſs wherein God is known and exalted.

AS ALSO,

Some QUESTIONS anſwered concerning the true Church, Miniſtry, and Maintenance under the Goſpel, and about the Lamb's War.

Written in travailing Bowels, by

ISAAC PENINGTON.

"Truly God is good to Iſrael, to ſuch as are of a clean Heart." Pſ. lxxiii. 1.

"Behold an Iſraelite indeed, in whom is no Guile." John i. 47.

"For he is not a Jew that is one outwardly; neither is that Circumciſion which "is outward in the Fleſh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and Circum- "ciſion is that of the Heart, in the Spirit, and not in the Letter; whoſe Praiſe "is not of Men, but of God." Rom. ii. 28, 29.

"Behold, the days come, ſaith the Lord, that I will puniſh all them which are "circumciſed, with the uncircumciſed, Egypt, and Judah, and Edom, and the "children of Ammon and Moab, and all that are in the utmoſt Corners that "dwell in the Wilderneſs; for all theſe Nations are uncircumciſed, and all the "Houſe of Iſrael are uncircumciſed in the Heart." Jer. ix. 25, 26.

THE PREFACE.

WHAT a day of diſtreſs, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God, is to come upon the wicked and ungodly world (even upon man, who was created in the image of God, but is now fallen from it, and found out of it, and in another image very unlike it); the eye which the god of this world hath blinded, and the heart which he hath hardened by ſin and tranſgreſſion, hath no ſenſe of.

What a day of diſtreſs and miſery ſome in this nation (and in other parts of the world) have already met with! how they have felt the weight of ſin upon their ſpirits, and what a ſore thing it hath been to them to feel their ſouls ſeparated from that God that made them (who is the Huſband and Father, King and Preſerver of ſouls, that are found in his image and nature); how they have been inwardly captivated by a foreign power, and oppreſſed, and made to ſerve under ſin, and could hear no effectual tidings of his appearance who was able to ſave, but their ſpirits were ready to ſink, and their hope of redemption, from that which oppreſſed and captivated them, almoſt cut off; this being an inward ſtate and condition, hath been altogether hid from the eye which is outward.

How the Lord at length appeared unto theſe (his bowels having long rolled over them, and he having long waited to be gracious to them, even till the full and acceptable ſet time was come); how his light hath ſhined in and upon them; how he gathered thoſe dry bones together, and breathed life into them, and made

made them live: this alſo is altogether an hidden thing from the eye of the world.

How the Lord, who appeared to them, hath exerciſed and tried them; how he hath judged them, and how he hath ſaved them; what deſolations he hath made inwardly in them, and what he hath built there: what an hammer, a ſword, a fire, &c. his pure word of life hath been in them; how that birth which could live without God, without his inward life, or upon words and knowledge without life, hath been famiſhed, until, by the pain of the famine, its very life and breath hath been taken from it, and it crucified with Chriſt, by the pain of the croſs of Chriſt: and what birth hath been raiſed and crowned afterwards, and beautified with the ornaments of righteouſneſs and ſalvation; yea, with the endleſs love and mercy with its God; and how the Lord is with his people, and dwells and walks in them, and how he hath humbled them to walk with him; and how in fear and humility they do walk with him in the light of day everlaſting, even as God is light, and walks in the light of his own day: theſe are very ſtrange and unknown things to the wiſeſt and moſt prudent in religion at this day, who are not gathered into the myſtery of godlineſs, (nor into the Spirit, power, and glory of the Father) where theſe things are revealed in and by the Son.

What faith the children of wiſdom have in the wiſdom and power which hath appeared: what confidence they have in the Lord their God; that he will ſtand by them in all their exerciſes and trials, both inward and outward; and what experiences they have had of the Lord's ſtanding by them in both: how his faithfulneſs doth not fail; and how their faith in him is upheld and preſerved by him, that it doth not fail in the ſtormy time, or hour of greateſt diſtreſs; and how their eye is unto him, and their hearts with him in the calms; ſo that their God is all in all unto them continually: (and who knows this but they that have it!) Oh! who can utter or declare the ſweetneſs and certainty of this, where it is enjoyed!

What

What love alſo the Lord ſheds abroad in their hearts; and how he teacheth and cauſeth them to love, by often circumciſing their hearts, and cutting off that which hindereth the pure love from ſpringing in them; and how they love others, in the love wherewith God (who is love) hath loved them; and how natural it is to them to pray for their enemies, and to bleſs them that curſe them, and do good for evil; but cannot requite evil for evil, being tranſplanted into, and growing up in, the root that is good; and ſends up good ſap and virtue into them, which nouriſheth all that is good in them, but is death and deſtruction to the remainders of evil, as the Lord purſueth and findeth it out: Oh! how impoſſible is it for the heart of man to conceive and underſtand!

Now I alſo having taſted of the mercy and goodneſs of the Lord, and having been brought out of a ſtate of great miſery and ſorrow of heart into the redemption and joy of God's choſen; and having found the Lord faithful to me, and giving me faith in the appearance of his Spirit and power in me, and true love (tender love) not only to my brethren in the truth, but to all mankind ſpringing in me, and divers fruits iſſuing forth from it; ſome of them at this time I cannot but publiſh, and the Lord open the hearts of thoſe whom it concerns, that they may find ſome help, benefit, and furtherance by it. For it is the joy of my heart to receive good from God; to be filled with his bleſſings, to have my cup overflow; and that others may be helped, refreſhed, and gladded therewith, and, by the ſweet taſte thereof, led to wait for the opening of the ſame root and fountain of life in themſelves, to yield living ſap, and ſend forth living ſtreams in them day by day.

TO

TO THE

JEWS NATURAL,

AND TO THE

JEWS SPIRITUAL.

Somewhat in the Love of GOD to the JEWS NATURAL, or SEED of ABRAHAM after the Fleſh.

OH! the glory of your ſtate outward, who were the people whom God once choſe and loved, and manifeſted his power and preſence among, above all people! whoſe land was the glory of all lands, to which God brought you out of Egypt by an outſtretched arm, through a dreadful wilderneſs, wherein ye were tempted, tried, and exerciſed, and the ſucceeding generation fitted to enter into. Oh! what laws and ſtatutes, and righteous judgments, did God give you, ſuch as no nation beſides had! What a temple had ye to appear before God in, and the ark of the covenant, and holy prieſts, kings and prophets! and how nigh was God to you, to be enquired of by you; and how ready to hear your prayers, in all that you called upon him for! The eternal God was thy refuge, and underneath were the everlaſting arms (the Lord was thy rock, and thou waſt built upon him); and he did thruſt out the enemy before thee, and

and did ſay, Deſtroy. And when the arm of the Lord did deſtroy them before thee, thou didſt dwell in ſafety alone; and the Lord was a fountain of living waters to thee, and his heavens did drop down fatneſs upon thee. Happy waſt thou, O Iſrael! who was like unto thee, O people ſaved by the Lord! the ſhield of thy help, and who was the ſword of thy excellency! and thine enemies were found liars unto thee, and thou didſt tread upon their high places. And it might have been ſtill ſo with thee, hadſt thou not been unmindful of the rock that begat thee, and forgotten God that formed thee. For thy glory ſhould not have been taken from thee, but ſwallowed up in a higher glory, wherein thou mighteſt have had the firſt and chiefeſt ſhare, hadſt thou not, by thy almoſt conſtant rebellion and unbelief, provoked the Lord againſt thee; not only often to afflict, but at laſt utterly to caſt thee off from being a people, and to chooſe a people in thy ſtead, who ſhould bring forth better fruits to the Lord of the vineyard, than thou in thy day hadſt done.

Yet when thy ſtate was thus glorious, it was not a ſtate of the truly ſubſtantial, laſting glory, but a ſhadowy ſtate or repreſentative thereof. Thy day of glory was not the day of the Meſſiah, the day of everlaſting light inwardly, wherein the Lord alone is exalted inwardly in the hearts of all, in whom he breaks down all that is contrary to the light of his day. Thy day was but the day of the outward ſhadows of the heavenly ſubſtance; but when that day (the day of the inward ſubſtance and glory) ſhined, thy ſhadows or ſhadowy ſtate was to fly away, and to be ſwallowed up in the pure ſubſtance and ſpiritual kingdom of the Meſſiah.

Thy birth from Abraham after the fleſh, was not the birth which was to inherit the promiſe in the kingdom of the Meſſiah; but there is a birth inwardly born of the Spirit, born after Abraham in his faith, who travels inwardly, as Abraham did outwardly, and ſeeks an inward country and city, whoſe builder and maker

maker is God: to these the spiritual kingdom and promises belong.

Thy circumcision was but the circumcision outward, the circumcision of the flesh; it was not the circumcision of the heart: that is the circumcision of the inward Jew, which indeed the scripture calleth for from you, because there was somewhat near you, which would have so circumcised you, had ye hearkened and given up to it. But ye, as a people, were not so circumcised, but were a stiff-necked people, (as Moses and the prophets were still complaining of you) uncircumcised in heart and ears, resisting God's Spirit both in your own hearts and in the prophets, until the Lord was provoked to take away both vision and prophet from you.

The Egypt in which your fathers were in bondage, and Pharaoh who oppressed them, was but the Egypt outward, and Pharaoh outward. There is an inward Egypt, wherein the spiritual seed, the inward man, the soul is in bondage; and there is a spiritual Pharaoh, that oppresseth the spiritual seed, in spiritual Egypt: and there is a stretching out the arm of the Almighty inwardly, to break the strength of the inward Pharaoh, to pierce Leviathan the crooked serpent, and to deliver the soul from under his captivity.

The wilderness also your fathers were led through, was but the outward wilderness, where they were tempted and tried by the Lord many ways, that he might do them good in the latter end. But the inward Israel, after they are led out of the inward Egypt, are tried in the inward wilderness, where they are judged after the flesh, and that wasted in them, which is not to enter into and inherit the good land, where they are tried in the furnace of affliction, and their filth purged away by the spirit of judgment and burning; that the righteous nation, which hath received the holy inward law, and keeps the truth, may enter into the good land, city, and kingdom of the Messiah, and inherit the blessed promises of life and salvation there.

Moses,

Moſes, your great prophet, was a type of the great, laſting, ſtanding prophet, whom God would raiſe up like unto Moſes, who was to give his inward law as Moſes did the outward, and to lead all the ſpiritual Iſrael as Moſes did the outward Iſrael; and his word was to be heard and ſtand in all things whatſoever he ſhall ſay unto his people: and whoſoever will not hear and obey this prophet, ſhall be cut off from among the holy, ſpiritual, and inwardly-living people.

Joſhua, who ſucceeded Moſes, led but into the figurative reſt: he was but a figure of him that inwardly leads into the inward and ſpiritual reſt; which the true Jews, which are inwardly created and formed by God, and made a willing people, in the day of his power, enter into.

The pillar of cloud, and pillar of fire in the wilderneſs, were but figures of the ſpiritual pillar of cloud and fire, by which the ſpiritual Iſrael are led and defended in the glorious goſpel-day of God's Spirit and power. Read Iſaiah, ch. iv. which ſpeaketh of the goſpel-day, and the pillar and cloud of fire to be created therein, and of the defence which is to be on all the inward and ſpiritual glory.

The land of Canaan, the outward good and kingdom of Iſrael, was but a figure of the inward land, and kingdom of the inward Iſrael, in the days of the Meſſiah. This is the land of Judah in which the ſong is ſung, becauſe of the inward ſtrong city where God appoints ſalvation for walls and bulwarks, which the righteous nation which keepeth the truth, enter into, Iſaiah xxvi.

Their outward kings in that land, and particularly David, were but types of the ſpiritual king, the ſpiritual David, whom God will raiſe up to the ſpiritual people, who ſhould ſeek the Lord their God, and David their king; who ſhall be their ſpiritual ſhepherd and ruler, whom God hath appointed to feed them in the integrity of his heart, and to guide them by the ſkilfulneſs of his hands, who is King of righteouſneſs and

and peace inwardly, and who miniſters righteouſneſs and peace to the ſheep and lambs of his paſtures.

Their outward prieſts (even their high-prieſts) were but a repreſentation of the great high-prieſt of God, who was to be a prieſt for ever, after the order of Melchizedeck, Pſal. cx.

Their outward covenant (made with them from the outward mount Sinai, upon the giving of the law, and holy ſtatutes and ordinances, by which they were to live and enjoy God in their outward ſtate) was but a ſhadow of the inward and ſpiritual covenant, the new and everlaſting covenant, which God makes with his inward and ſpiritual people in the latter days.

Their outward law, as written and engraven in tables of ſtone, was but a ſhadow of the inward law, which God puts into the children of the new covenant, inſomuch that they need not go outwardly to learn the knowledge of God, or his will or law; but the inward Iſrael find it inwardly written within. There the iſles who wait for the law of the Spirit of life, for the law of the Meſſiah, receive the miniſtration of the law (in the Spirit and power of the Meſſiah) which they wait for.

Their outward mount Sion, on which the outward temple was built by Solomon, that wiſe king, that righteous king, that peaceable king, was a figure of the inward mountain, whereupon the inward houſe is built in the days of the goſpel, in the days of the Meſſiah: and to this mountain are the ſpiritual people to come up and worſhip. And this is the Sion and Jeruſalem (even inward and ſpiritual) from which the law and word of the Lord go forth in the days of the Meſſiah: and the ſpiritual houſe of Jacob combine or agree together to walk in the light of the Lord, who ſends forth his light and truth, and leads them to his holy hill, and to his tabernacles.

Their outward tabernacle and temple, ſanctified by God for him to dwell and appear in, was a ſhadow of God's inward dwelling-place in man; "I will tabernacle in them." God dwelleth not in houſes or temples

temples made with hands; that is not the place of his reſt, as ſaith the prophet Iſaiah: but the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whoſe throne is in heaven, and the earth his footſtool, he dwelleth alſo with him that is of an humble and contrite ſpirit, to revive the ſpirit of the humble, and to revive the ſpirit of the contrite ones.

Their outward ſabbaths were not the laſting ſabbath or reſt of the goſpel, but given them for a ſign; but the day of redemption from ſin, the day of reſting from ſin, the day of ceaſing from the works of the fleſh, the day wherein God is all, and doth all by his Spirit and power inwardly, and wherein he alone is exalted: this is the day of reſt which the Lord hath made for the ſpiritual Iſrael, and which they are glad of and rejoice in.

So their incenſe and ſacrifices were not the laſting incenſe and ſacrifices, but ſhadows thereof. The prayers of the ſaints, when God pours out the ſpirit of prayer and ſupplication upon them, and they pray to him therein, that is the incenſe. "Let my prayer "be directed before thee as incenſe, and the lifting "up of my hands as the evening ſacrifice." And this was the incenſe and pure offering, which in every place was to be offered up to God's name among the Gentiles, when his name ſhould be great among them, as Malachi foretells. And what ſaid David of old, when God's Spirit and the holy viſion was upon him? "Sacrifice and offering thou didſt not deſire; "mine ears haſt thou opened: burnt-offering and ſin-"offering haſt thou not required. Then ſaid I, lo I "come; in the volume of the book it is written of "me: I delight to do thy will, O my God; yea, thy "law is in the midſt of my bowels. The ſacrifices "of God are a broken ſpirit (rent your hearts, and "not your garments, and turn to the Lord your "God); a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou "wilt not deſpiſe." The offering praiſe to God from a ſincere heart, and the ordering of the converſation aright, theſe are the ſacrifices well-pleaſing to God;

for ſacrifices were not the thing which God mainly required of outward Iſrael, but this, OBEY MY VOICE: and obedience is more acceptable than all other ſacrifices, and to hearken than the fat of the choiceſt rams.

Beſides, thoſe outward ſacrifices could not remove or take away ſin from the conſcience, but he that came to do the will, and to put an end to thoſe ſacrifices and oblations, which were but outward and imperfect; he doth both waſh and take away ſins from within, and alſo bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs, where his light ſhines, and his pure life ſprings inwardly in the heart.

And this is the ſubſtance of all the ſhadows, even the light eternal, the word eternal, the Son of the living God, (who is light as the Father is light) the word nigh in the mouth and heart, the word of the new covenant; the which Moſes directed your Fathers to, Deut. xxx. and by which the Lord ſpeaketh, and hath ſpoken throughout the world, Pſal. l. 1. and teacheth every man that hearkeneth to his voice, to do juſtly, love mercy, and walk humbly with his God, as it is expreſſed by the prophet Micah.

Now to you Jews, of the outward line of Abraham, (whoſe return to the Lord my ſoul moſt earneſtly deſireth after, and for which I have moſt vehemently and wreſtlingly prayed to the Lord) are ſome few weighty queries upon my heart:

Query 1. How came David to pant ſo after the living God, like the hart or hind after the water-brooks? Was it not from the quickening virtue of this inward word, which Moſes the man of God had directed the mind to? Read Pſal. cxix. and ſee how he breathed for quickenings from this word, on which all depends. And if ye come to experience this word, and the quickening virtue of it, and follow the Lord on therein, ye will ſoon come to know the day of the Meſſiah, and the glory of his kingdom, which is not outward, tranſitory, and of a periſhing nature; but inward, ſpiritual, and everlaſting (as David well knew, and ſpake ſenſibly of, Pſal. cxlv. and elſewhere.)

Query

Query 2. What are the waters which every thirſty ſoul is invited to? Are they not the waters of the Meſſiah? are they not waters that flow out of the wells of ſalvation? Iſaiah xii. Do not the ſpiritual Iſrael draw ſpiritual water out of the wells of the Saviour in the days of the Meſſiah? What is it to come to theſe waters? Oh! that ye experimentally knew! But this I will tell you, from true and certain experience, that if ye come to take notice of this word of life, which God hath placed nigh in your mouths and hearts, to ſeparate between the evil words and evil thoughts of the enemy's begetting and bringing forth, and the good words and good thoughts of God's begetting and bringing forth, and incline your ear to it, and come from that which it reproves in you, and draws you from to itſelf; your ſouls ſhall ſoon come to live; and he that gives you life, will make an everlaſting covenant with you, even the ſure mercies of David: but ye muſt ſtill mind him as a witneſs, and leader, and commander, inwardly in your hearts, that ye may be preſerved in the covenant, and enjoy the bleſſings of it; ſee Iſaiah lv.

Query 3. Did not the Meſſiah come at the ſet time, at the time ſet by the Holy Spirit of prophecy? Did he not come in the prepared body to do the will? and did he not do the will? And after his obedience to his Father, was he not cut off, though not for himſelf? And after his cutting off, were not ye made deſolate? why were ye made deſolate? why did ſuch a ſtroke come upon you as never before? Oh! conſider it! Read Dan. ix. 24. to the end of the chapter, and let him that readeth underſtand.

Query 4. What was that curſe, and on whom did it light? "Let their table become a ſnare to them," &c. Pſal. lxix. Was it not on thoſe that gave gall and vinegar to the Meſſiah to drink, whom David was a figure of, and ſpake in Spirit concerning? Whoſe eyes are always darkened? Doth not the veil lie ſtill on your whole nation? Do ye know the inward mountain, where the veil or face of the covering is deſtroyed?

in the inward day and light of the Meſſiah it is deſtroyed. There that which veils the noble eye of the mind is known, and alſo that which deſtroys and removeth it. To what purpoſe is it for you to read Moſes and the prophets, when the veil is ſo upon you, that ye cannot ſee what is to be aboliſhed, and is aboliſhed by the dawning of the glorious day of the Meſſiah, and what is to remain and never to be aboliſhed? There is a Jewſhip, there is a circumciſion, there is a ſabbath, there is a reſt, &c. for the inward and ſpiritual people, which is to remain, and never to be aboliſhed.

Query 5. Who were thoſe that God would hide his face from, and ſee what their end ſhould be, becauſe they were a froward generation, children in whom was no faith? Who were they that moved God to jealouſy, and provoked him to anger? And what was the people and fooliſh nation he would provoke them to jealouſy and anger with? Deut. xxxii. Was it not the ſpiritual, the holy nation inwardly, the true Jews, whom God took from among the Gentiles, whom he appeared among, and was a God and a Father to, when he caſt off and forſook the Jews outward, and left them to be a deſolation?

Query 6. Who are thoſe that ſhall be hungry when God's ſervants ſhall eat? and thirſty, when God's ſervants ſhall drink? and aſhamed, when his ſervants ſhall rejoice? Are not your ſouls hungry and parched for want of the ſpiritual ſuſtenance, which the living God ſatisfieth his ſervants with, making a feaſt of fat things to them on his inward holy mountain? And are not ye aſhamed of your expectations of the Meſſiah, while the ſervants of the Lord rejoice in him, their Prince and Saviour, and witneſs him daily a leader and commander to them? What is the people whom the Lord hath ſlain and made deſolate? (Are not ye a ſlain people to God, alienated from his life, Spirit, and power, dead in your literal notions and obſervations?) And what are the ſervants of the Lord, whom the Lord hath called by another name, even a name

name that ye never knew? ſee Iſaiah lxvi. And conſider, how all your day God ſpread out his hand to you, and ye were rebellious, and would not hear; and now night is come upon you, and your viſitation, as ſuch a people, is and hath been long ended.

Query 7. Did not God ſignify by the prophet Malachi, that he had no pleaſure in you, nor would accept an offering at your hand? And did not he alſo ſignify the chooſing of the Gentiles in your ſtead; that the called among the Gentiles ſhould be his people; and his name which ye had profaned, ſhould be great among them, and their incenſe and pure offering in every place be accepted, even from the riſing of the ſun to the going down of the ſame? read Mal. chap. 1.

Query 8. Now the inward people, and the inward covenant, the new covenant, are brought forth, ſhall ye ever be owned or regarded as an outward people, according to your outward covenant any more? Will not all ſuch expectations fail you for ever? Ye have looked, from generation to generation, for the coming and appearing of the Meſſiah outwardly, after an outward manner: but his coming and appearance is inward; and he ſetteth up his kingdom, his everlaſting kingdom in his ſaints, and in their hearts he ruleth inwardly; and the Meſſiah, the ſeed of the woman, bruiſeth the head of the ſerpent there. Oh! that ye knew the ſubſtance! Oh! that ye knew the word of life in the heart, and were turned to it, and daily faithful and obedient! that ye might feel it cruſhing and daſhing the power of ſin and corruption in your hearts! This is the conſolation, hope, and joy of the inward and ſpiritual Iſrael! Oh! that ye might be made partakers thereof; and that your long outward captivity and deſolation might at length end in inward freedom and redemption! Amen.

Somewhat of Concern to the JEWS Spiritual, who are of the Seed of ABRAHAM ſpiritually, or according to the Faith, and gathered in this Day of GOD's Power, to the true and everlaſting SHILOH.

" THE ſcepter ſhall not depart from Judah, nor a " lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh " come; and unto him ſhall the gathering of the peo- " ple be," Gen. xlix. 10.

Old Jacob, in the ſpirit of prophecy, ſaw that Judah was to have the ſcepter, the kingly power; and it was not to depart from him, it was to be his right, and the lawgiver was to be between his feet, till Shiloh came; then the right was Shiloh's to reign, and to give laws to his people, whom he ſhould gather out of the kingdom of darkneſs, and from Satan's power, into his own inward, ſpiritual, and everlaſting kingdom. This was the true king, God's king, whom he would ſet upon the holy hill of ſpiritual Sion; and all the holy, inward, ſpiritual gatherings of all people, ſcattered from the holy, living power, muſt be to him.

" I will overturn, overturn, overturn it, and it ſhall " be no more, until he come whoſe right it is, and I " will give it him." And his dominion ſhall not paſs away, or the ſcepter and lawgiving power ſhall not paſs away from him, as it did from Judah, nor ſhall his kingdom ever be deſtroyed, Dan. vii. 14. but God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he ſhall reign over the houſe of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there ſhall be no end.

Query. *But who are the people that ſhall be gathered to him?*

Anſ.

Anſ. The people that ſhall hear his voice, and come at his call, that ſhall receive the inſtruction of wiſdom, and feel the drawing power and virtue of the Father, in the day of his power. It is written in the prophets, "All thy children ſhall be taught of the "Lord." And every one that is taught and learneth of the Father, cometh to the Son, cometh to the Meſſiah, cometh to the Shiloh, to the Word eternal, to the Word of life in the heart.

Query. *Was not the Meſſiah promiſed to the Jews, to come of them, and to be appropriated to them?*

Anſ. He was promiſed to them, and to come of them; but not to be appropriated to them: but he was to be the univerſal Saviour to all that ſhould come under his enſign and banner. "He ſhall ſet up an "enſign for the nations, and he ſhall ſprinkle many "nations," &c. And God promiſed that he would give his Son (his elect choice ſervant) for a light to the Gentiles.

Query. *Were the Jews then excluded?*

Anſ. No; they were to be gathered to Shiloh, as well as others. Nay, the Lord had a ſpecial regard to them; the goſpel was firſt preached to them; they had the firſt offer, or the firſt call to the ſpiritual glory; they were the children of the prophets, and of the covenant of God made with their fathers; unto whom God having raiſed up his Son Jeſus, ſent him to bleſs them, in turning away every one of them from their iniquities. And the whole nation, turning from their iniquities, ſhould have been gathered by him, and ſhould have enjoyed the bleſſing of his day and kingdom. Yea, the firſt gathering was from among them, and the firſt glorious goſpel church was at Jeruſalem, where the Spirit and power of the Lord Jeſus did moſt eminently and wonderfully break forth, and great grace was upon them all. But the nation was not gathered to Shiloh, nor did come under his ſcepter and government; but only a remnant of the nation. So theſe being gathered, the reſt were caſt

off; and the enſign was carried among the Gentiles, and the great gathering was there among them.

Query. *How is it manifeſt that the great gathering to Shiloh was to be from among the Gentiles?*

Anſ. By many expreſs prophecies of ſcripture, and promiſes to the Meſſiah, that he ſhould have the Gentiles for his inheritance and poſſeſſion. When God eſtabliſhed his King, the Meſſiah, upon the holy hill of ſpiritual Sion, notwithſtanding all the heathen's rage againſt him, and the people of the Jews imagining a vain thing, (thinking to keep the body of him in the grave, who was the reſurrection and the life) what ſaith the Lord to him? "Aſk of me, and I will "give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the "uttermoſt parts of the earth for thy poſſeſſion," Pſ. ii. The Lord ſaid, in another place, "It is a "light thing that thou mayeſt be my ſervant, to raiſe "up the tribes of Jacob, and to reſtore the preſerved "of Iſrael; I will alſo give thee for a light to the "Gentiles, that thou mayeſt be my ſalvation unto the "ends of the earth," Iſai. xlix. 6. Again the Lord ſaith further, "From the riſing of the ſun, even unto the "going down of the ſame, my name ſhall be great "among the Gentiles; and in every place incenſe ſhall "be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for "my name ſhall be great among the heathen, ſaith "the Lord of hoſts," Mal. i. 11. "Sing, O barren! "thou that didſt not bear; break forth into ſinging, "and cry aloud, thou that didſt not travail with "child; for more are the children of the deſolate "than the children of the married wife, ſaith the "Lord," Iſai. liv. 1. Who was the married wife? Who was the mother in the days of the firſt covenant? Was it not the Jeruſalem below, who was then deſolate and barren? Was it not another Jeruſalem, which is free, and the mother of all the ſpiritual children? Why was ſhe now to rejoice and ſing? But becauſe ſhe was to break forth on the right hand and on the left, and her ſeed was to inherit the Gentiles, and make the deſolate cities to be inhabited, ver. 3.

The

The covenant of Mount Sinai did bring forth a great people, whereof Jeruſalem, that was below, was the mother. The covenant afterwards made, beſides that in Horeb, whereof the Word nigh in the heart and mouth is the foundation, (by which Word God circumciſeth) was as yet barren, and did not bring forth a people to the Lord. But this covenant was to have a time; the Jeruſalem above was to have a time, wherein her ſeed ſhould inherit the Gentiles; and the Maker, the Huſband, ſhould be called the God of the whole earth, ver. 5. Read Gal. iv. and ſee how the apoſtle of the Gentiles expounds the myſtery, ſhewing which is the free woman, and her free children, and which is the bond woman, and which the bond children, who are caſt out in the day of God, and in the ſhining of his heavenly light inwardly, and cannot inherit the glorious kingdom of the goſpel, with the children of the free woman. And conſider who were the people in the time of the firſt covenant? Who obtained mercy then? Were they not the Jews? And who were not a people, and who did not obtain mercy, but were left out of the love and mercy of the firſt covenant? Were they not the Gentiles? And did not the Lord promiſe that he would have mercy on them that had not obtained mercy? And that he would ſay to them that were not his people, THOU ART MY PEOPLE; and they ſhall ſay, MY GOD, Hoſ. ii. 23. compared with Rom. ix. 26. Was not this once gloriouſly fulfilled in the firſt viſitation of the Gentiles? And is it not again gloriouſly fulfilled in his now viſiting them again with the freſh ſound of the everlaſting goſpel, as was promiſed, Rev. xiv. 7.

Oh! what a promiſe is that concerning the day of God! that "in that day there ſhall be a root of Jeſſe, "which ſhall ſtand for an enſign of the people; to it "ſhall the Gentiles ſeek, and his reſt ſhall be glo-"rious," Iſai. xi. 10. Is not *this the day* wherein the holy mountain is known, and that nothing can hurt or deſtroy there? And doth not the knowledge of the Lord cover his land, his earth, as the waters do the ſea?

ſea? And doth not the root of Jeſſe, the rock of life and ſalvation, ſtand for an enſign, placed ſo by God; and who can diſplace it, or ſhake them that are built on the inward Mount Sion? Yea, is not the reſt of the weary ſoul, when he comes hither, found to be very glorious? And when this enſign is more fully lifted up, ſhall not the Gentiles more abundantly come unto God from the ends of the earth, and bewail their dead and eſtranged eſtate from God? (ſaying, "Surely "our fathers inherited vanity, and things wherein is no "profit," Jer. xvi. 19.) And ſhall they not turn from all their idols to ſerve the living God? Theſſ. i. 9. And concerning the Meſſiah it was promiſed, that in his name ſhould the Gentiles truſt, and the iſles ſhold wait for his law, and he ſhould bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, Iſai. xli. 11. with Matt. xii. 21.

But what ſhould I mention any more ſcriptures unto you concerning this thing, when-as ye have ſo large, full, certain, and daily experience of it in that which is pure and living of God, which never deceived nor can deceive any; for ye are begotten by his Spirit into his own image and nature, and have received the Spirit of adoption, wherein ye cry Abba Father to the Father of ſpirits. He found you indeed in a ſtrange land, under great captivity, and alienation from him. Ye have been in Egypt, in Sodom, in Babylon ſpiritually; but the mercy of the Lord hath followed you thither, and the arm of the Lord hath reached to you there, and hath cut Rahab, and wounded the Dragon: yea, he whom the Lord hath given for a light to the Gentiles, hath ſhined to you there, in the midſt of your darkneſs. So that God ſent among you the prophet like unto Moſes, (though far above Moſes) and hearing him, he led you out of Egypt, and by the rod of his power did ſigns, and wonders, and valiant acts there, breaking that power which with a ſtrong hand held you captive there, and oppreſſed you. And you have known the travel, trials, and temptations in the ſpiritual wilderneſs, and the falling of the carcaſes which were to fall there, and the

the holy leading by the pillar of cloud and fire through all the entanglements and dangers therein. Yea, and the faithful among you, the tried and prepared among you, have paſſed over Jordan (the river of pure judgment) into the good land, and come to witneſs David and Solomon (who are one in Spirit) your King, who rules in righteouſneſs, and miniſters to you peace everlaſting. And ye have an High-prieſt there, not after the order of Aaron, but after the order of Melchizedeck, who is made the everlaſting High-prieſt of God; not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endleſs life; whoſe lips preſerve the knowledge of the law for you, in that endleſs power of life; who miniſters for you, and to you, in the endleſs power, and intercedes with power and efficacy, and ſprinkles the blood of the covenant upon you, which takes away ſin from your hearts and conſciences. So that ye know the inward Jew's ſtate, the inward holy land and kingdom, the inward circumciſion, before ye enter into that land; and the inward Lamb, the inward paſſover, the inward Mount Sion, and Jeruſalem; the inward ſacrifices and incenſe, the inward tabernacle, temple, and ark of the covenant, the inward ſhew-bread, the inward manna, the inward rod that buddeth, the inward candleſtick and the lamps, which are never to go out in God's temple. And what ſhould I ſay more? All that that people were to be outwardly, in an outward way and ſtate, hath God made inwardly in the ſubſtance; and what God would have been to them outwardly, had they obeyed his voice, and kept his ſtatutes and judgments, that he is to you inwardly, who are the called and choſen, and faithful followers of the Lamb; and ye are the enjoyers of their bleſſings and promiſes inwardly. Oh! the glory of your ſtate to the eye that is opened to ſee it!

Now ſomewhat doth remain on my heart unto you.

Oh! be daily ſenſible of the tender goodneſs and mercy of the Lord, which is broke forth among you! What mercy, what love hath the Father ſhewn unto you,

you, that ye ſhould be thus accounted the children of God! That they which were once nigh, ſhould be removed ſo far off; and ye, which were ſo far off, ſhould be brought ſo nigh, and ſhould for ever inherit the ſure mercies of David! For of a truth the Lord will never forſake you; but his mercy endures for ever towards you, and your ſtakes ſhall never be removed; but this inward building ſhall ſtand for ever. This Sion is the place of God's reſt, where he will dwell for ever; whereof the outward Sion was but a figure.

Secondly, Remember what the Lord promiſed himſelf concerning you. When he was weary of that people, and continually complaining of them, oh! what did he promiſe himſelf concerning the people he would bring forth by the Spirit and power of the Meſſiah in the latter days! Did he not promiſe himſelf that they ſhould be an holy people, an inwardly circumciſed people, a people that ſhould pleaſe him; ſheep that ſhould hear the Shepherd's voice, and be healed by him, gathered home to him, and ſo follow and learn of him the Shepherd; that they ſhould all know him from the leaſt to the greateſt; and that he would forgive their ſins, and heal their backſlidings, and they ſhould not return to folly, or backſlide any more, as the children after the fleſh always did? Is not this the people whom indeed God hath formed for himſelf, who ſhall ſhew forth his praiſe?

Thirdly, Remember what a covenant God hath prepared to make with you, as ye incline your ears to him, and are led by him into the holy agreement with him; even a covenant which is not weak, as the old covenant was; but is full of virtue and vigour, to enable you to do whatever God requires of you. Mark what it contains, putting God's fear into you: not the fear which is taught by man's precepts, which man may get into his carnal mind; but which God places as the treaſury of life in the heart; as it is written, "The fear of the Lord and his treaſure," Iſai. xxxvi. 6. And oh! who knows the precioufneſs of his treaſure! How it cleanſeth the heart, and keepeth it clean,

and

and will not ſuffer the mind that is ſeaſoned with it, and kept to it, to depart from the living God! It fenceth from unbelief, it fenceth from diſobedience; it will not ſuffer the ſoul ſo much as to meddle with any appearance of evil. Oh! precious, glorious, bleſſed treaſure! happy is the man that feareth always with this fear! Another precious thing this covenant contains, is the law written in the heart, that it ſhall be as near, yea, nearer than ſin is, in the heart that is made tender, and hath the law of the Spirit of life written in it. Who knows what it is to have the law of love, the law of life, the law of the Spirit, the law of faith, the law of new obedience, livingly written by God in his heart! Surely none can but they in whom God writes it! And ſuch cannot but deſire to have it written in their hearts by his bleſſed finger daily more and more. But this covenant contains yet more, even the putting of his own Spirit within them, to be a fountain of life there, a fountain of ſtrength and wiſdom there, to make them more and more willing in the day of his power, and to cauſe them to walk in his ways, and keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and do them, that the Lord their God may bleſs them, and delight in them.

Oh! who would not long after, and take up the croſs and ſhame, to enjoy the glory of this ſtate! Oh! what hath God done for a poor deſpiſed remnant among the Gentiles! Oh! who would not deſire to keep this bleſſed covenant with the Lord, that he might fully enjoy the Lord, that the marriage with the Maker might be witneſſed in his loving-kindneſs and everlaſting righteouſneſs, and all unrighteouſneſs and uncleanneſs might be put away, removed, and ſeparated from the heart for ever. Ah! the virgin ſpirit which the Lamb loves, and delights to marry with! "He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit," and he muſt part with all that is old, evil, unclean, and corrupt in him, that would be joined to the Lord, and become one Spirit with him. Oh! who would loſe the precious fear of the covenant, which is clean, and endureth

endureth for ever, and keepeth clean and chaſte to the Lord for ever! And who would miſs of one law which God hath to write in the hearts of his children, when every law is a law of life, and changeth the mind into the nature of the lawgiver! And who would grieve God's Spirit, which is our Comforter? Or quench that which kindles the pure flame of love and life in our hearts? Much leſs can any of his dear and tender children be willing to vex him, by manifeſt careleſſneſs and diſobedience, who giveth us to drink of the river of his pleaſure!

Oh! my dear friends, ye do not know the great travail of my heart, that all the children of the Lord might walk before him in all well-pleaſing, that we might come all into covenant, into the full covenant, and walk fully with him in the covenant, that his anger might be for ever turned away from us all, and he might never be wroth with, nor rebuke any of us any more. It is written on my heart the breaking forth of this glory would reach the Jews: and though they be caſt off as to their outward ſtate, and not ſo to be owned, or come into that glory any more; yet there is a day of mercy and love for them, as to that inward ſtate of life and redemption, which their outward ſtate typified: and the breaking forth of the full glory of the Gentiles, and the manifeſtation of God's mighty power and preſence with them, (they being made by God a people to him, and ſo walking with God, as none poſſibly can but thoſe who are created anew, and ſo made by him) this might provoke the Jews (the poor, ſcattered, forſaken Jews) to ſeek after the Lord their God, and David their King, inwardly to be revealed in them, and rule among them.

The Lord God of our life and tender mercies, carry on to perfection this bleſſed work of his, which he hath ſo mightily begun, and ſo mightily hitherto carried on; and keep us in the ſenſe of his good Spirit, and in tender and holy ſubjection thereto, and in unity together in the life, wherein we have been gathered and preſerved, and in pure judgment over all the workings

workings of the enemy every where, and in the goſpel love one to another, and to all men, even our greateſt enemies, that we may ſeek the good of all men, even the reſcuing and preſerving all out of ſin and wrath, as much as in us is poſſible; that the pure light wherewith our God and heavenly Father hath enlightened us, may ſhine in us; and the life wherewith he hath quickened us, may live in us, and we may feed on nothing but life, and grow in nothing but life and truth, to the great glory of our heavenly Father, and to the great joy of our hearts. Amen.

A few Words to ENGLAND, my Native Country.

Oh! Land of my Nativity! Oh! my dear Countrymen!

THE pure power of the Lord is upon me, and the ſprings of life open in me; and among many other things, I am melted in love and deſires after your welfare. And this is in my heart to ſay to you: if I now teſtify to you in truth of a pearl, a heavenly pearl, an everlaſting pearl, will ye not hear me? If I tell you your heart is the field, or earth, wherein it is hid, will ye not conſider of it? If the everlaſting goſpel be preached again, which contains true tidings of redemption from ſin, will ye not liſten after it? If the kingdom of God, and righteouſneſs of Chriſt, be to be revealed within, would ye not willingly learn to wait for it there, and beg of God that the eye may be opened in you, which alone can ſee it when it doth appear. Indeed God's viſitation is upon this nation in an eſpecial manner; his light and power is breaking forth in it, againſt the darkneſs and power of the ſpirit of Satan, which hath captivated and ſtill captivateth

vateth many. Ye desire outward liberty, and the enjoyment of your outward rights; would ye not be free inwardly? Free from the base, earthly, selfish nature and spirit, which man, fallen from God, and the glory wherein he created him, is degenerated into? Oh! is not the power of God, and life of Christ, able to restore man to this? He that created man at first, so glorious in his own image, is he not able to create him anew? Oh! hear, my dear countrymen! the power is revealed which createth anew; and they that receive it, and are as clay in the hands of the great Potter, given up to be formed by it, are daily created (by the operation of it) anew, into an holy, heavenly, innocent, living, tender, righteous frame day by day; and are made willing, daily more and more, to be the Lord's, in this day of his power; and do receive power to become sons, and strength against their soul's enemies: and the glorious work of redemption which God hath begun in them, the arm of his strength mightily carrieth on in them, to their comfort and his everlasting praise.

There is a spiritual Egypt and Sodom, as well as there was an outward; and there is a spiritual wilderness, and Canaan also; and the arm of God's power inwardly and spiritually hath been revealed in this spiritual Egypt, wilderness, and Canaan, as really as ever it was in the outward. Do ye not read of a Jew inward, and a circumcision inward, and the leaven inward, and keeping the feast of unleavened bread, even of bread that is not leavened with sin? And he that eats of the unleavened bread, it unleavens him of sin, and leavens him with life and holiness: for it is an holy bread, and a living bread. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, which they that feed upon live, and they that live feed upon. And though they be many, yet feeding upon this bread, they become one bread, one living body, consisting of a living head, and living members; for the same life and pure heavenly nature which is in the head, is communicated by him to the members.

But

But how ſhall we find this? may ſome ſay.

I will tell you how we found it, and how none can miſs of it, that ſweep the houſe, and make a diligent and faithful ſearch after it. That in the heart of man which turns againſt ſin, diſcovers ſin, draws from ſin, wherein God miniſters help againſt ſin, that is it. That is the pearl hid; that is the kingdom hid; in that is the righteouſneſs of God revealed from faith to faith, in all that receive and give up to this holy leaven. This is of the nature of God and Chriſt; this is a meaſure of his light, of his pure life; this is the law and commandment everlaſting, which God writes in the hearts of his ſpiritual Iſrael. For the inward Jew hath inward tables, where the inward law is written, for the inward eye to read. Oh! how nigh is God inwardly, to the inward people, in this our day! Oh! the pure glory is broke forth! But alas! men are in their ſeveral ſorts of dreams, and take no notice of it. What ſhall the Lord do to awaken this nation? In what way ſhall his power appear, to bring down unrighteouſneſs, and to bring up righteouſneſs, in the ſpirits of people? Do ye not think the Lord hath been at work? How could deceit be ſo waſted inwardly, and truth ſo grown inwardly, and overſpread more and more, and gain ground in the nation, if the hand and power of the Lord were not with it, bleſſing it. Oh! take notice of the handy-work of the Lord, ye children of men, and wait to feel truth near, and to partake of the living virtue and power of it, that ye may feel your hearts creating anew, and the old heavens and earth may inwardly paſs away, wherein dwells unrighteouſneſs; and the new heavens and the new earth may be inwardly witneſſed, wherein dwells righteouſneſs. Oh! that this nation might become a paradiſe of God! Oh! that every one might be ſenſible of his preſence, and power, and kingdom, and righteous government inwardly in the heart, from the king that ſits on the throne, to the beggar on the dunghill! Surely man was not made for himſelf! Surely he was not made ſuch a creature as now he is!

but in the holy image of God, with love in his heart to God above all, and to his neighbour as to himſelf. Oh! what are the religions and profeſſions of ſeveral ſorts where this love is not found! The Lord is reſtoring his image, and bringing forth the true pure religion again. The pearl, the truth, contains and comprehends it. Oh! buy the pearl! oh! buy the precious truth! ſell all that is contrary to it for it; take up the croſs to all that is evil in thee, as the light in thee maketh it manifeſt, and thou ſhalt have the free poſſeſſion of it in thy heart, and feel it a root of life, a treaſure of life, a well of life, out of which the living water will be daily ſpringing up in thee unto life everlaſting. Amen.

The 22d of the 7th month, 1676.

THREE QUERIES

UPON

THREE VERSES of the XLVIth PSALM.

Verſe 4. "THERE is a river, the ſtreams where-
" of ſhall make glad the city of
" God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Moſt
" High."

Query 1. Which is the river, and what are the ſtreams thereof, which make glad the city of God? And which is the city of God, which they make glad? which are the tabernacles of the Moſt High? and which is the holy place of thoſe tabernacles? Oh! my dear countrymen, that every one in this nation did underſtand and enjoy theſe things! For the Lord is ready

ready to beget a will, to beget a thirſt in the hearts of the children of men; and whoſoever thirſteth, whoſoever will, is called to the waters, and may come to the waters, and take of the water of life freely, (Iſa. lv. 1. Rev. xxii. 17.) yea, to the full ſatisfaction of their ſouls. For indeed this is the day of God's power, wherein he doth make his people willing to come to him, and to abide with him in the fountain of living waters; and thoſe that do come to him, and abide with him, he abundantly ſatisfieth with the fatneſs of his houſe, and giveth them to drink of the river of his pleaſures, Pſal. xxxvi. 8, 9. Mark, God is the fountain of living waters, with him is the fountain of life, a river of pleaſures, a river whoſe ſtreams make glad the whole city, even the holy place of all the tabernacles of the Moſt High; and he giveth his citizens to drink of it; and whoſoever drinketh of it, it maketh them glad, it refreſheth their life. Oh! that more knew what this means!

Verſe 5. "God is in the midſt of her, ſhe ſhall not "be moved! God ſhall help her, and that right early;" or when the morning appeareth, or from the morning appearing.

Query 2. How is God in the midſt of this city? Is it not more glorioufly in an inward way, than ever he was in the temple in the outward Jeruſalem, in an outward way? How is ſhe built? How is ſhe founded and ſituated? How comes it about that ſhe ſhall not be moved? How is God her refuge and ſtrength, and preſent help in the time of trouble? After what manner doth God ariſe inwardly, and ſcatter his enemies? How doth the morning light help her? After what manner, when the enemy cometh in like a flood, doth the Spirit of the Lord lift up a ſtandard againſt him? Ah! bleſſed are they that know and experience, and live in the enjoyment of theſe things! Oh! that this whole nation did ſo! Were it not worth the ſuffering of much, the denying of much, and the bearing of much judgment, to come to this?

Verſe 10. "Be ſtill, and know that I am God; I "will be exalted among (or in) the heathen: I will "be exalted in the earth."

Query 3. What is that ſtillneſs wherein God is known to be God, not outwardly in notion, but inwardly in the heart? Where is that ſilence of mind, wherein God teacheth his Iſrael in the new covenant, to know him as he is; even all of them, from the greateſt to the leaſt? How will God come to be exalted in the heathen, and in the earth? Is it not by the light of his day, breaking forth and ſhining in them? Where this day breaks forth in any heart, doth it not break down and deſtroy the kingdom of darkneſs inwardly? And doth not the King of glory conſume the man of ſin, the wicked one that was exalted in the temple before, (which temple belonged of right to God) with the Spirit of his mouth, and deſtroy him with the brightneſs of his coming or appearing? Iſaiah xi. 4. 2 Theſſ. ii. 8. Then is the day known wherein the Lord alone is exalted. Oh! that this day were more known; and the Lord, who is indeed worthy, were more exalted, and all fleſh become his footſtool for ever!

Concerning the true Church and Miniſtry under the Goſpel, and the Maintenance thereof; ſome few Queſtions anſwered in Truth and Plainneſs of Heart, and left to the Witneſs and Teſtimony of GOD in other Mens Conſciences.

Queſt. 1. *WHICH is the true church, or the goſpel-church, or the church according to the new covenant?* For there was an old covenant, and a church according to that, under the law: and there is a new covenant, and a church according to that, under the goſpel.

Anſ.

Anſ. For the clearing of this to the hearts and conſciences of people, let us conſider and enquire what the new covenant is, and then it will more eaſily appear which is the church according to the new covenant.

The new covenant, according to plain ſcripture, and according to manifeſt experience in this bleſſed day of the ſhining of the goſpel-light in mens hearts, is a covenant of God's putting his law in the inward parts of people, and writing it in their hearts, and of his becoming their God, and making them his people, and of teaching them all to know him, (inwardly and experimentally) from the leaſt to the greateſt, and of being merciful to their unrighteouſneſs, and remembering their ſins and iniquities no more, Jer. xxxi. 33, 34. Heb. viii. 10, 11, 12.

Now if this be the new covenant, the covenant of the goſpel-church, then they are the goſpel-church who are the people of God according to this covenant, who have the law put by God into their inward parts, and writ in their hearts; and ſo according to this law and covenant, have God to be their God, and are his people, and are taught by him to know him, (as it is written, "All thy children ſhall be taught of the "Lord," Iſaiah liv. 13. and John vi. 45.) and whoſe unrighteouſneſs God hath been merciful to, and whoſe ſins and iniquities he remembereth no more, being waſhed away from their conſciences by the blood of the everlaſting covenant, which the blood of bulls and goats could never do; ſo that this is the New Teſtament-church (or goſpel-church); a church of Jews inward, as the law-church was a church of Jews outward: a church of inward worſhippers, of worſhippers in Spirit and in truth, John iv. 23. as the law-church was a church of worſhippers outward: a church of inwardly circumciſed ones, as the law-church was a church of outwardly circumciſed ones, Rom. ii. 29. A church of ſuch as are inwardly holy, as the law-church was to be a church of ſuch as were outwardly holy: a church of ſuch as offer inward incenſe and ſacrifices,

as the law-church was a church of ſuch as offered outward incenſe and ſacrifices: a church of inwardly-redeemed ones, from the inward Egypt, from the inward darkneſs and power of Satan, as the law-church was a church of ſuch as were redeemed from the outward Egypt, and the power of Pharaoh outward: a church that hath the inward ark, (Rev. xi. 19.) the inward preſence, the inward manna, &c. as the outward church of the Jews had the outward.

Queſt. 2. *Which is the true goſpel miniſtry, and who are the true goſpel miniſters?*

Anſ. Thoſe whom Chriſt ſends forth, in the Spirit and power of his Father, to gather and build up this church. Chriſt had all power in heaven and earth given him, even to this very end, to gather, defend, and build up his church: and he bid his apoſtles wait for the ſame power; and ſends forth his miniſters in the ſame power, that they may be able miniſters of the goſpel, which is not words but power, even the power of God unto ſalvation, Rom. i. 16. The new covenant ſtands not in the letter, but in Spirit and power; and they that are the miniſters of it, muſt receive life, Spirit, and power from Chriſt, (the head) and miniſter in that Spirit, life, and power to the members, or they cannot nouriſh and build them up; yea, they muſt preach and miniſter to the world in it, or they are not able to gather out of the world into it. Chriſt, the Lord of his church, the foundation of life in his church, the everlaſting rock, is a living ſtone; and his church is built of lively ſtones: and how can any miniſter life unto them, or build them up in the life, Spirit, and power, but who are in the life, Spirit, and power, and who receive life, Spirit, and power from the Head, to further, quicken, and build up the living members with? The milk which nouriſheth the living babe, is living, which muſt come pure from the breaſt of life, and not be mixed with man's wiſdom or brain inventions, or it cannot yield pure nouriſhment. What then muſt the bread, and wine, and water of the kingdom be, whereon the children and heirs of the

the kingdom muſt feed, or they cannot be ſatisfied? And the miniſters of the goſpel are ſtewards of this heavenly life, this heavenly Spirit, this heavenly power, this heavenly treaſure which they have in the earthen veſſels, and which God enables them to bring forth, for the feeding of his lambs and ſheep. Chriſt ſaid unto Peter, "Loveſt thou me more than "theſe?" Peter anſwered him, "Yea, Lord, thou "knoweſt that I love thee." If it be ſo, "feed my "lambs, feed my ſheep," ſaid Chriſt to him. But how ſhould he feed them? In what ſhould he feed them? With what ſhould he feed them? All power, ſaith Chriſt, is given me in heaven and in earth; and I am to aſcend to my Father, and to receive the fulneſs of his Spirit; and do ye wait, and ye ſhall receive abundantly of the ſame Spirit and power, and then in that Spirit and power ye ſhall be able to feed my lambs and ſheep, that are begotten and gathered to me, in it; but out of it none is able to feed and build them up; for that is the very thing they are to be fed with and built up in. Indeed a man may be a miniſter of the letter, a miniſter of the law, without the Spirit and power; but of the goſpel he cannot poſſibly; for that conſiſts not in letter, but in Spirit, 2 Cor. iii. and the faith that is to be begotten there, is not to ſtand in the wiſdom of man, but in the power of God. The goſpel-ſtate, the goſpel-church, the goſpel-building, begins in the power, and is carried on in the power, and finiſhed or perfected in the power; and the whole miniſtry of the goſpel is to partake of this power, and miniſter in it, or they can do nothing in this work. Chriſt Jeſus our Lord begun it in this power, and none can carry it on without this power: the Lord God of glory laid the foundation; "Behold, I lay in Sion for a foundation," &c. Iſai. xxviii. 16. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5, 6. And the quickening Spirit alone is able to make living ſtones and ſpiritual ſtones; and the Lord alone is able to build them up by the operation of this Spirit and power; and they that are the true miniſters of the goſpel, miniſter in

this, and are to wait for it daily from God, that they may miniſter in it.

Queſt. 3. *What is the maintenance of the miniſters of Chriſt, or what is to be the maintenance of the true miniſters under the goſpel?*

Anſ. Chriſt, who hath ſent them forth to miniſter in his name, hath provided for them; and they that are his true miniſters, are ſatisfied with what he hath provided for them, Mat. x. 10. being careful not to make the goſpel, which is to be an inward bleſſing, outwardly chargeable to any. The mind of the true miniſters is about the ſervice of Chriſt; how they may be faithful to him, gather ſouls to him, feed them with the bread of life from him; not what they all have from men for ſo doing, for ſuch covet no man's gold or ſilver, &c.

Some QUESTIONS anſwered concerning the LAMB'S WAR.

Queſt. 1. *WHO is the Lamb?*

Anſ. He that takes away the ſins of the world. The Word which was in the beginning. "Behold the Lamb of God," ſaid John, John i. 1. and ver. 29. He that was born of the virgin Mary after the fleſh; and was alſo the man-child, born of the travailing-church, after the Spirit, Rev. xii. 5.

Queſt. 2. *Who makes war with the Lamb?*

Anſ. All that are in wickedneſs, in darkneſs, in ſin and corruption, and under the power thereof, who ſtrive to defend and maintain this kingdom againſt the appearance of his light, Spirit, and power in them.

Queſt. 3. *What ſtrength have they on their ſide that make war againſt the Lamb?*

Anſ. The ſtrength of the great red dragon, who hath ſeven heads and ten horns; and in every one of his heads is wiſdom, and in every one of his horns there is

is power. So that dreadful is the battle that is fought between them, either inwardly in the heart, or outwardly in the world, when Chriſt appears in his light, Spirit, and power, to aſſault and break down the kingdom of darkneſs, and to ſet up his own kingdom, which muſt be ſet up, even in the world, Dan. vii. 14. 27. Rev. xi. 15.

Queſt 4. *Did the great red dragon and his army ever (in any reſpect) prevail in this battle?*

Anſ. Yes; for even while the Lamb, and his pure life and holy teſtimony have prevailed, ſo that the dragon and his army could get no ground over them inwardly, but ſalvation (the wall and bulwark of God's heritage) and ſtrength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Chriſt, did prevail inwardly; yet the dragon, even then, hath prevailed over their goods, liberties, and lives outwardly; and he drove the woman, the true church, out of her place, as I may ſay, that ſhe was forced to fly into the wilderneſs, he ſo ſorely aſſaulted her: yea, after that, he alſo made war with the remnant of her ſeed, and caſt ſome of them into priſon, and drank the blood of thoſe that would not drink his falſe church's cup, but keep the commandments of God, and have the teſtimony of Jeſus, Rev. xii. and chap. ii. 10. Yea, the beaſt to which he gave his power (which had ſeven heads and ten horns like him, chap. xiii. 1.) made war with the ſaints, and overcame them outwardly, though he could not overcome them inwardly; for he could not make them to worſhip him, ver. 7, 8. Nay, nor the ſecond beaſt neither, though he had horns like a lamb, and ſpake like a dragon, and exerciſed all the power of the firſt beaſt, and did great wonders, and had power to give life unto the image of the former beaſt, and would kill all that would not worſhip the image of it; and would ſuffer none to buy or ſell but ſuch as had the mark or name of the beaſt; yet neither could this beaſt overcome the followers of the Lamb, as to their inward life and teſtimony, though it had power to kill and ſuppreſs them outwardly,

ver.

ver. 11. to the end, and chap. xiv. 9. to ver. 13. which plainly ſhews the ſaints had patience, and kept the commandments of God, and the faith of Jeſus, and would not worſhip the beaſt and his image, nor receive his mark, either in forehead or hand.

Queſt. 5. *What was the cry up and down nations, when the dragon and the beaſt thus prevailed, and when the dragon and the falſe church carried her cup of fornications up and down through kingdoms and nations, and made the kings and inhabitants of the earth drink thereof; and who would not drink thereof, ſhe would not let them buy nor ſell, but impoveriſh, impriſon them, and drink their blood?* Rev. xvii. 2. and 6.

Anſ. The cry every where was, "Who is like unto "the beaſt? Who is able to make war with the "beaſt?" Indeed there appeared no power any where able to withſtand or reſiſt this power, which the dragon had, who gave it both to the beaſt which aroſe out of the ſea, and to the beaſt which aroſe out of the earth; both which joined together to perſecute all that would not drink of the falſe church's cup, which was golden without, but full of abominations and filthineſs of fornication, fornicating from the holy life, Spirit, and power of the Lamb inwardly, who is the head of the true church and true worſhippers, Rev. xiii. 4. and chap. xvii. 4, 5.

Queſt. 6. *What is the time of the dragon's, the beaſt's, and falſe church's thus prevailing againſt the true church, in reference to the outward, though they cannot prevail againſt its inward life and teſtimony; but that (through patience and ſufferings) prevails over and reigns inwardly, in the midſt of all their cruelty and oppreſſing of the outward man?*

Anſ. It is the time of Antichriſt's reign, and ſitting in the temple as if he were God, and exalting himſelf over all that is called God, and which ought to be worſhipped. It is the time of the true church's being in the wilderneſs, and of the man-child's (which the true church brought forth) being caught up to God; which things were to laſt, according to the ſcripture account,

account, one thouſand two hundred and ſixty days, or a time, times, and half a time, 2 Theſſ. ii. 3, 4. Rev. xii. 6, 14.

Queſt. 7. *What will the Lamb do when this time is out?*

Anſ. He will come and make war again; he will come with his heavenly armies, armed with ſpiritual armour, and fight an heavenly battle; yea, he will judge and make war in righteouſneſs, againſt the unrighteouſneſs of the dragon, and the beaſt, and the falſe prophet; and his heavenly armies ſhall follow him their Captain and Leader, on white horſes, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, who ſhall fight in his Spirit and power, againſt all that he fighteth againſt; and out of his mouth goeth a ſharp ſword, that with it he ſhould ſmite the nations; and he ſhall rule them with a rod of iron, and make the ſpirits of all his oppoſers bow under him, and fly to ſhelter themſelves from that wrath which they cannot eſcape. Oh! who would not kiſs the Son, that he might not provoke the Lamb to wrath againſt him, whoſe wrath is dreadful! Rev. xix. 11. to the end. Pſal. ii. 11.

Queſt. 8. *What ſhall the cry be, when God's Spirit and power prevaileth over the dragon's ſpirit and power, when the Lamb gets the victory, when he ſmites the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips ſhall ſlay the wicked; when he brings down the dragon, beaſt, and falſe prophet, and the falſe church, mother of harlots, (which hath drunk the blood of ſaints) with his vials, plagues, woes, thunders, &c.? when Babylon the great city falls, which made all nations drunk with her ſpiritual wine of fornication?*

Anſ. Then the power which doth this ſhall be magnified. Then it ſhall be ſaid no more, who can make war with the beaſt? but who can withſtand his power? Who can make war with the innocent, righteous Lamb, (who hath his ſword in his mouth) and with his tender-hearted, faithful followers, and proſper? "Who ſhall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy "name? For all nations ſhall come and worſhip be-

"fore

" fore thee; for thy judgments are made manifeſt. " Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God " Almighty; juſt and true are thy ways, thou King " of ſaints." Rev. xv. 3, 4. " Yea, a great voice " of much people in heaven ſhall ſay, Hallelujah, " ſalvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto " the Lord our God: for true and righteous are his " judgments; for he hath judged the great whore, " which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, " and hath avenged the blood of his ſaints at her " hand," chap. xix. ver. 1, 2.

Now doth it not concern all people to conſider which is Sion, God's holy mountain, and which is the Jeruſalem of his building; and the holy city of God, the holy church of God, the mother of all the truly living children? for the Jeruſalem which is above, and which is free, is the mother of them all, Gal. iv. 26. And alſo which is Babylon, the city built by man, and the ſpirit of Antichriſt, in a kind of likeneſs, but not in the real nature of the true church; that they may wait for and follow God's call to come out of her, and may not partake of her ſins, of her ſorceries, (Rev. xviii. 22.) of her fornication from the pure life, Spirit and power, and ſetting up worſhips, and compelling people to worſhip in her forms, (which are out of the life, and out of the power) that they partake not of her plagues, which will indeed be very dreadful, ſuch as ſhall affright any from coming near her, or meddling with her ſpiritual ſorceries and fornications any more, Rev. xviii. 4. and ver. 9, 10. Oh! therefore let every one conſider what the beaſt is, what his image, what the mark in the forehead, what in the right-hand; and take heed he be not found worſhipping the beaſt and his image, or receiving his mark, either in his forehead or right-hand, leſt God make him to drink of the wine of his wrath, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation, and he be tormented with fire and brimſtone in the preſence of the holy angels, and in the preſence of the Lamb, and have no reſt day nor

nor night, Rev. xiv. 9, 10, 11. I had rather run great hazards outwardly, and ſuffer much affliction and perſecution from men, to keep my ſoul true to God, in the ſpiritual worſhip and teſtimony which he hath given me, againſt all falſe ways and invented worſhips, than expoſe my ſoul to the hazard of drinking of this dreadful cup of God's indignation; which the Lord God of tender mercies teach men, and give them true wiſdom, to avoid and eſcape. Amen.

THE

CONCLUSION.

" BEHOLD my ſervant ſhall deal prudently, he " ſhall be exalted and extolled, and be very " high. As many were aſtoniſhed at thee (his viſage " was ſo marred more than any man, and his form " more than the ſons of men); ſo ſhall he ſprinkle " many nations; the kings ſhall ſhut their mouths at " him: for that which hath not been told them, ſhall " they ſee; and that which they had not heard, ſhall " they conſider," Iſa. lii. 13, 14, 15.

" Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace " is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath bleſſed " thee for ever. Gird thy ſword upon thy thigh, O " Moſt Mighty, with thy glory and thy majeſty. And " in thy majeſty ride proſperouſly, becauſe of truth " and meekneſs, and righteouſneſs; and thy right " hand ſhall teach thee terrible things. Thine arrows " are ſharp in the hearts of the King's enemies, where- " by the people ſhall fall under thee. Thy throne, " O God, is for ever and ever: the ſcepter of thy " kingdom is a right ſcepter. Thou loveſt righteouſ-

" neſs,

" neſs, and hateſt wickedneſs, therefore God, thy God, " hath anointed thee with the oil of gladneſs above " thy fellows," Pſal. xlv. ver. 2. to 8.

" Strengthen ye the weak hands, and confirm the " feeble knees. Say to them that are of a fearful " heart, Be ſtrong, fear not: behold, your God will " come with vengeance, even God with a recom- " pence, he will come and ſave you. Then the eyes " of the blind ſhall be opened, and the ears of the " deaf ſhall be unſtopped. Then ſhall the lame man " leap as an hart, and the tongue of the dumb ſing; " for in the wilderneſs ſhall waters break out, and " ſtreams in the deſert. And the parched ground " ſhall become a pool, and the thirſty land ſprings of " water; in the habitation of dragons, where each " lay, ſhall be graſs with reeds and ruſhes. And an " highway ſhall be there, and a way, and it ſhall be " called the way of holineſs; the unclean ſhall not " paſs over it, but it ſhall be for thoſe: the wayfar- " ing men, though fools, ſhall not err therein. No " lion ſhall be there, nor any ravenous beaſt ſhall go " up thereon, it ſhall not be found there; but the " redeemed ſhall walk there. And the ranſomed of " the Lord ſhall return and come to Sion with ſongs, " and everlaſting joy upon their heads: they ſhall " obtain joy and gladneſs, and ſorrow and ſighing ſhall " flee away," Iſai. xxxv. ver. 3. to the end.

Bleſſed be the Lord God of life for ever! theſe ſcriptures, and many more, are ſweetly and preciouſly fulfilled in the hearts of a remnant, in this our day. They were once (in a degree) fulfilled in the day of the appearance of the word of life, in the prepared body of fleſh. They were again more generally fulfilled, in the day of the pouring out of his Spirit, and gathering a people to him, both from among the Jews and Gentiles, whom he did ſprinkle with his holy life, Spirit, and power. And they are again fulfilled in the hearts of many, after the long night of darkneſs, and great and large apoſtaſy from the Spirit and power of the apoſtles. Bleſſed, Oh! bleſſed be the Lord, the

the Sun of righteouſneſs hath again ſhone forth, and appeared inwardly in a glorious, living, powerful manner, to them that have feared his name; and he hath been a God of vengeance to the man of ſin; yea, to all that was dark, fleſhly, and corrupt in them; and a God of mercy and tender bowels to thoſe which panted after, and waited for, his ſalvation. And the healing virtue from under the wings of the Saviour, and the holy anointing, hath dropped upon the eyes of the blind, the pure eye-ſalve, and they have been opened; and the ears of the deaf, by the voice of the Son of God, have been unſtopped; and the inwardly and ſpiritually lame have leaped as an hart; and the tongue, which could not name God in truth and righteouſneſs, but hath been dumb before him, and before men alſo, could not but ſing, becauſe of the breaking forth of the waters and ſtreams of life, upon the thirſty land and parched ground, making them a pool and ſprings of water; which land, which thus is changed from its wilderneſs and parched ſtate, into an holy, freſh, and living ſtate, the dragons do not lodge in; nor is it any more an habitation or cage for unclean and noiſome birds, (as great profeſſing Babylon, the mother of harlots, with all her fleſhly profeſſing daughters, is) but life dwells there: the Holy One is in the midſt of this land, and it brings forth the fruits of life and righteouſneſs, to the Righteous and Holy One. And here the King of glory's highway, even the way of holineſs, is known, which none but thoſe whom he makes holy can walk in. Let men profeſs what they will, yet being unclean in heart and converſation, they cannot paſs over to come into this way; but the holy, they which are made holy by God, and keep to, live in, and follow that which is holy, though wayfaring men, and though otherwiſe fools, yet they ſhall not err here, but be preſerved by the holy power, in the holy way, which is prepared and caſt up for theſe: and as for that which would tear and deſtroy, it ſhall not be found on all that holy mountain where theſe live and feed.

Yea,

Yea, here is the houſe of God and throne of God, and God the Judge of all, and Jeſus the Mediator of the new covenant, and the blood of ſprinkling, where the ranſomed of the Lord enjoy the preſence of the bridegroom, whom God hath ſet King, and who reigns on his holy hill of inward and ſpiritual Sion, and cauſeth them to ſing, who feel him reign (even the everlaſting ſeed of life to reign inwardly in the heart). Oh! everlaſting joy is upon their heads! they have obtained joy and gladneſs; and ſorrow and ſighing flee away, when the joy unſpeakable and full of glory is felt ſpringing in the heart, from the ſenſe of the preſence and enjoyment of the bridegroom. For of a truth, the Lord hath comforted Sion; yea, he hath comforted many of her waſte places (he was angry with her daughters, before their filth was purged away by the Spirit of judgment and burning; ſince that time his anger hath been turned away, and he hath comforted them, Iſai. xii. 1, &c.); and he hath made her wilderneſs in many hearts like Eden, and her deſert like the garden of the Lord (even like the garden that he waters): and how can joy and gladneſs but be found here, with thankſgiving and the voice of melody? Iſai. lviii. 11. and chap. li. 3. Thus it is with ſuch of the gathered people and nation of the Lord, that hearken and give ear to him, and have known the way of life to proceed out of his mouth, and his judgment to reſt for a light, ver. 4.

SOME

SOME SENSIBLE,

WEIGHTY QUERIES,

CONCERNING

Some THINGS very ſweet and neceſſary to be experienced in the TRULY-CHRISTIAN STATE.

Whereunto is added,

A POSTSCRIPT,

CONTAINING

Some QUERIES on ISAIAH L. 10, 11.

A SCRIPTURE of deep Counſel and Concern to the darkened and diſtreſſed States of ſome among thoſe that fear and obey the LORD.

Written by one who hath been ſorely darkened and diſtreſſed for a long Seaſon, but at length mercifully enlightened and comforted by the Hand which afflicted and diſtreſſed him;

ISAAC PENINGTON.

" Come, and let us return unto the Lord, for he hath torn, and he " will heal us; he hath ſmitten, and he will bind us up." Hoſ. vi. 1.

" And in that day thou ſhalt ſay, O Lord, I will praiſe thee " though thou waſt angry with me, thine anger is turned away " and thou comforteſt me." Iſai. xii. 1.

A BRIEF

PREFACE.

INDEED the Lord hath reached unto me by his living power, and thereby hath begotten ſomewhat which he doth own, and which he hath taught to know and own him in his living appearances in my heart; and by its pure life and operations in me, I know it to be the true power. And truly I would fain have this life and power more and more reach to, prevail, and ſpread in my own heart, and in the hearts of other men: I am not for any notional religion out of the power, in any way or form whatſoever (no, indeed, I am not ſo much as for the very true form of godlineſs out of the power); but where there is any touch, any ſenſe, any operation, any ſavour of the true life and power any where, my ſoul loveth and embraceth it, bleſſing the Lord for it. And oh! that this might be viſited by the Lord, wherever it is, and kept alive to the day of redemption, and led by the Lord into the pure and living way, and holy everlaſting covenant of life, wherein he redeems; for which end theſe queries have broke forth from me: and indeed, no leſs than a neceſſity (or a neceſſitous force of love and life purſuing me) hath conſtrained me to publiſh them, who with reverence of ſpirit commit them into the hands of the Lord, who can open the hearts of whom he pleaſeth, and give the living ſenſe of what comes from him. I am ſatisfied that God's powerful work of redeeming will go on. Oh! bleſſed be his name, who hath a mighty arm, and hath done mighty things with it inwardly in mens hearts! and we are in the true faith aſſured that he will yet do more mighty things, as he ſeeth good, to the gladding of the hearts of thoſe whoſe hope is in him, and who have no help beſides him.

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CONCERNING

Some THINGS very ſweet and neceſſary to be experienced in the TRULY-CHRISTIAN STATE.

Query 1. WHAT is the water wherewith the ſoul or inner man is to be waſhed, that it may be cleanſed from its inward filthineſs, as outward things are by waſhing with outward water? Ezek. xxxvi. 25. Pſal. li. 2, &c.

Query 2. What is the anſwer of a good conſcience towards God, when the ſoul is inwardly baptized and made clean? Pet. iii. 21.

Query 3. Chriſt ſaith, "Bleſſed are the pure in "heart:" Do, or can, any witneſs purity of heart before this waſhing?

Query 4. How may the heart be ſprinkled from an evil conſcience, and the body waſhed with pure water; ſo that there may be a drawing near to God with a true heart, and in full aſſurance of faith? Heb. x. 22. Pſal. xxvi. 6.

Query 5. How might the Jews waſh and make themſelves clean? Iſai. i. 16. Could it be any otherwiſe done by them, than by taking heed to the word of the new covenant, nigh in the mouth and heart, to which Moſes had directed them? Deut. xxx. 14. Pſal. cxix. 9.

Query

Query 6. What is the fire which takes hold of, and burns up the luſts and corruptions of the heart? Is it not the word of life within, which flames againſt evil, and hammers down evil? Doth not the Holy One in the midſt of the ſpiritual Iſrael do this? When Chriſt, who knocks at the door of the heart, is let in, and his voice hearkened to, doth he not become a Spirit of judgment and burning, judging and burning up what is evil there? Is it not bleſſed to know this ſpiritual appearance, and this work of Chriſt in the heart? Iſai. iv. 4. and x. 17.

Query 7. What are the enemies of a man's houſe? Who muſt overcome them? How may they be overcome? Is a man ſafe, or delivered from them till they be overcome? Matt. xv. 19. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Query 8. What is the houſe of the ſtrong man, where he dwells till he be diſpoſſeſſed? Who can diſpoſſeſs him? How doth he diſpoſſeſs him? How doth he ſpoil his goods, and then garniſh the houſe anew? Oh! what a new creation and change within is witneſſed when this is done! And who would not wait, and pray, and believe, and ſuffer the judgings and burnings of the Spirit of judgment and burning, that this may be done thoroughly and effectually? Luke xi. 21, 22. Iſai. xxvi. 9. 2 Cor. v. 17.

Query 9. What is that coming to Chriſt which none can witneſs but thoſe that hear and learn of the Father, and are taught by him, in the drawings of the life and Spirit of the new covenant, to come to the Son? John vi. 44, 45.

Query 10. Who can confeſs Jeſus to be the Lord by the Holy Ghoſt? Can any but they that receive the help of his Spirit, and feel ſomewhat of his lordſhip and holy dominion in their hearts? Iſai. xxvi. 13.

Query 11. What is the precious faith, which is the gift of God, which none can obtain but they that are born of God? John i. 12, 13.

Query 12. Can any rightly believe that Jeſus is the Chriſt, unleſs they receive this faith, which God gives

to his own children, that are born of his Spirit, 1 John v. 1.

Query 13. Doth not this faith give victory over the world? (over the worldly nature and ſpirit within, over the worldly nature and ſpirit without alſo)? Can any other faith give victory? 1 John v. 4.

Query 14. What is the love of God's children? Whence doth it ariſe? How come they to love? Is it not of an heavenly ſpiritual nature? Doth it not ariſe from God's begetting them, and circumciſing their hearts, and teaching them in the Spirit of the new covenant to love him, and one another, yea, and enemies alſo, 1 John iv. 7. Deut. xxx. 6. 1 Theſſ. iv. 9.

Query 15. How come the children of God, who are begotten of him, to obey his commandments? Is it not from the conſtrainings of his love, which makes them natural and eaſy, (where the birth and nature is grown up) and not grievous and burthenſome? Mat. xi. 33. 1 John v. 3.

Query 16. What is the fear God puts into the hearts of the children of the new covenant? Is it a fear taught by the precepts of men, or a fear ſpringing from the root of life within? Can any who receive this fear from God, and who are preſerved in the ſenſe of it, (and in the holy awe and reverence which it produceth) depart from the holy, tender, living God and Father? Jer. xxxii. 40.

Query 17. What is the law which God writes in the hearts of the children of the new covenant? Is it not the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus? Is it not the law which the iſles wait for? Iſa. xli. 5. And do the iſles wait for it in vain? Oh! bleſſed be the Lord, by the once diſtreſſed and miſerable ones, in this age it hath not been waited for in vain!

Query 18. What is the truth that makes free indeed from the law of ſin and death? Is it not the truth as it is in Jeſus; the inward truth, which hath virtue and power in it, to work againſt, and work out that which is contrary to truth, and ſo deliver and free the mind from

from it? For the light, which is truth, can expel darkneſs; the life, which is truth, can overcome death; yea, the truth, which is living, holy, and righteous, can overcome and ſubdue the unholy and unrighteous nature, and break down the ſtrong-holds, and bring every rebellious and captivated thought into captivity and ſubjection, John viii. 32. Rom. viii. 1. Epheſ. iv. 20, 21. 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

Query 19. How doth God cauſe the children of the new covenant to walk in his ſtatutes, and to keep his judgments, and do them? Is it not by putting his Spirit into them, and by the holy virtue, power, and operation thereof in them? Doth not that make them a willing people in the day of his power? And doth not that give them to do alſo, and ſtrengthen them with might in the inner man? So that not grieving that, or quenching that, that is a flame of life in them, and fills their hearts with joy; and the joy of the Lord is in their ſtrength, and in this joy and ſtrength they can rejoice, and work righteouſneſs, and remember the Lord and his ways, Iſai. lxiv. 5. Ezek. xxxvi. 27.

Query 20. Can any work righteouſneſs, or do righteouſneſs, but he that is truly righteous, inwardly righteous, in whom the righteouſneſs of God, the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, is revealed from faith to faith? Muſt not the tree be good, before the fruit can be good? Muſt not the heart be changed, be made holy and righteous, before it can bring forth that which is holy and righteous? Can any but the plants of God, the plants of righteouſneſs, bring forth the fruits of righteouſneſs? Iſai. lxi. 3. and 1 John iii. 7.

Oh! that people, nations, tongues, and languages, could underſtandingly, ſenſibly, and experimentally, as in God's ſight, with the ſeal of his bleſſed Spirit, anſwer every one of theſe things!

THREE QUERIES more added.

Query 1. DOST thou indeed know the new covenant? Haſt thou inwardly felt the ſpiritual powerful gathering by the mighty arm and power of the Lord, out of the ſinful nature and ſtate, into it? Doſt thou abide with God therein? Art thou daily taught and fed by him there? Theſe are very weighty things. Can any man be ſafe or happy without experiencing them? Heb. viii. 8, &c.

Query 2. Haſt thou experienced the true hunger and thirſt after the living waters? Haſt thou been called and led to them? Haſt thou eat and drank the bread, wine, and milk which thoſe waters yield? Haſt thou been abundantly ſatisfied with the fatneſs of God's houſe, and hath he given thee to drink of the river of his pleaſure? Hath the Lord opened an ear in thee to hear as the learned? And haſt thou inclined thine ear, and come unto him who gives life, and received him who is life, and gives life in that inward, ſpiritual, living appearance of his in the heart, wherein and whereby he gives life? Haſt thou known his appearance inwardly, as of a living ſtone? Haſt thou heard and learned of the Father how to come to him, as to a living ſtone? And haſt thou been new-created and formed a living ſtone by him? And art thou a living ſtone, built upon him the living ſtone inwardly in ſpirit, daily living in him, and daily receiving ſpiritual life and virtue from him? If it be thus with thee, then ſurely thou doſt know and enjoy the everlaſting covenant, even the ſure mercies of David, Iſai. lv. 1, 2, 3. Pſal. xxxvi. 8, 9. 1 Pet. ii. 4, 5.

Query 3. Doſt thou ſenſibly and experimentally know how the Spirit of the Father begets the child-like life, love, and fear in the heart; and how the pure fear of the Lord is the beginning of wiſdom, and the living child's

child's treaſure? And doſt thou know what the womb is wherein the living child is formed? What the Jeruſalem above is, which is the mother of all that are truly living? And how Chriſt is formed in all that are begotten, and born of, and live in the Spirit? Iſai. xxxiii. 6. Gal. iv. 26. John iii. 6. 8. Gal. iv. 19.

THE

CONCLUSION.

OH! how miſerable is he who is deceived about theſe things! Oh! how happy is he who hath received the true underſtanding from God, which cannot be deceived; wherein he hath the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit concerning them, and knoweth the truth as it is in Jeſus; as it is in his life, in his Spirit, in his power, who miniſters after the power of an endleſs life, unto all his ſheep, who are returned to the Shepherd and Biſhop of the ſoul, who hear his voice and follow him, wherever he goes or leads, who is an eternal Shepherd, and eternal Door of life to his, and leads to precious paſtures, and ſweet ſtill ſtreams of life, and is giving the ſweet food, reſt, and pure pleaſure of eternal life unto his abundantly; even as it is his will, that after their many ſore trials, exerciſes, and travels, (and faithfulneſs to him therein) they ſhould abundantly poſſeſs and enjoy it. Glory to the Lord for ever, whoſe kingdom is ſet up in the hearts of many, and who already reigns in the hearts of many, and will reign in the hearts of more! Oh! that men might hear the ſound of his everlaſting goſpel, and learn to fear him, and give glory to him, and know the hour of his judgment come in their own hearts, that by his judgment againſt ſin and unright-

unrighteouſneſs in them, they might come to know and worſhip him; and then the worſhip of the dragon and beaſt would ſoon come to an end in their hearts; and they would worſhip the begetter of holineſs, the begetter of life, the King of ſaints, who dwells and rules in thoſe that are his own, as the devil the deſtroyer doth in thoſe that are his! The Lord God of everlaſting power break down the kingdom of Satan, (the kingdom of unrighteouſneſs and darkneſs in mens hearts) and exalt the kingdom and ſcepter of his own Son inſtead thereof. Amen.

POSTSCRIPT.

Containing ſome QUERIES on ISAI. L. 10, 11.

" Who is among you that feareth the Lord, and " obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that walketh in " darkneſs, and hath no light?" It is rendered in another tranſlation: " And no light ſhineth upon " him" (which was Job's caſe in his great affliction, as is ſignified by him, chap. xxix. 2, 3.) " Let " him truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon " his God." Ver. 10.

" Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compaſs about " with ſparks, walk in the light of your own fire, " and in the ſparks ye have kindled, this ye ſhall " have of mine hand, ye ſhall lie down in ſorrow." Ver. 11.

Query 1. DOTH not the tender and merciful God many times, in the bowels of his love and mercy, bring darkneſs and great diſtreſs upon mens ſpirits, that they might wait for his healing and redemp-

redemption? Yea, doth not this befall ſome who fear the Lord, and are found in the holy reverence and obedience to him? And is it not good that it ſhould befall them?

Query 2. Should not men, in ſuch a condition of darkneſs and diſtreſs, truſt in the name of the Lord, and ſtay upon him till he cauſe light to ariſe out of obſcurity, and comfort them that mourn in Sion; giving them beauty for aſhes, the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praiſe for the ſpirit of heavineſs?

Query 3. Are not perſons very prone and liable, in time of darkneſs and diſtreſs, inſtead of waiting upon God for his help and ſalvation, to be kindling a fire, and compaſſing themſelves about with ſparks?

Query 4. Are there not ſome who cannot be content without heat and warmth in their religion and performances, and yet, inſtead of waiting for God's kindling the fire, and his cauſing the ſparks of life to ariſe, kindle a fire of themſelves, and compaſs themſelves about with ſparks of their own kindling?

Query 5. May not men, after they have kindled a fire and ſparks, walk in the light thereof? And may not God, in his juſt judgment and ſore diſpleaſure againſt them, leave them to themſelves, and give them up ſo to do?

Query 6. What will God do in the end, or what in the end ſhall befall them from God, who kindle a fire and ſparks, and have continued walking in the light thereof, and have been heated and warmed thereby? Will not God cauſe them at length to lie down in ſorrow? Oh! that perſons that are ſerious in religion, might not thus err, and ſo provoke God to give them up to walk in the light of the fire and ſparks of their own kindling!

Query 7. When do men kindle a fire and ſparks of their own? Do they not firſt forget the God of their ſalvation, and become unmindful of the rock of their ſtrength? And do they not then plant pleaſant plants, and ſet ſtrange ſlips? (And where do they plant and

ſet

ſet them?) But what will the harveſt be in the day of inheritance, when they come to reap and inherit what they have planted and ſown? (For what a man ſoweth, that muſt he alſo reap). Will it not be a heap for the fire of God's jealouſy to take hold on, in the day of their tribulation, anguiſh, and deſperate ſorrow of heart? Iſai. xvii. 10, 11.

Query 8. In what light do men build up a wall inwardly, and daub it with untempered mortar, to ſecure themſelves from the wrath to come? Is it not in the light of the fire and ſparks of their own kindling? Will any wall or defence built up in the light of this fire or ſparks ſecure men? Will not the wrath of God, in the day thereof, break forth upon all the workers of iniquity, whatever their faith or hope be to the contrary? Will any wall defend the ſoul from the overflowing ſtorm of wrath, but the wall of God's ſalvation? And can any enter within that wall, but the righteous nation that keepeth the truth? Iſai. xxvi. 1, 2. The name of the Lord indeed is a ſtrong tower; but can any run into it, and get ſhelter in it, but the righteous? Prov. xviii. 10.

Query 9. Who is he, who, when he falleth, ſhall riſe again; and after he hath ſet in darkneſs, the Lord ſhall be a light unto him? Is it not he that feareth the Lord, and obeyeth the voice of his ſervant, that in the time of his darkneſs and diſtreſs truſteth in the name of the Lord, and ſtays upon his God? Yea, is it not ſuch an one as is willing to bear the indignation of the Lord, becauſe he hath ſinned againſt him, until he plead his cauſe, and execute judgment for him? Will not the Lord bring forth ſuch an one to the light, and ſhall not ſuch an one behold his righteouſneſs? Mich. vii. 8, 9.

Query 10. When ſhall perſons light ariſe in obſcurity, and their darkneſs be as the noon-day? When ſhall their light break forth as the morning, and their health ſpring forth ſpeedily, and their righteouſneſs go before them, and the glory of the Lord gather them up? And when ſhall the Lord be their continual guide,

guide, and ſatisfy their ſoul in droughts, and make fat their bones, and make them like a watered garden, and like a ſpring of water, whoſe waters fail not? Are not theſe promiſes belonging to the goſpel ſtate? And are they not fulfilled in the goſpel ſtate, as people come to know and keep the goſpel faſt, and the goſpel ſabbath? Read Iſai. lviii. 6. to the end, and wait on the Lord, to receive underſtanding from him, that in reading thou mayeſt underſtand.

Oh! that men knew the goſpel faſt, and the goſpel ſabbath, with the feaſts of unleavened bread, tabernacles, trumpets, &c. A little of the knowledge of the myſtery of the hidden life and power, is of more value, and would do their ſouls more good, than heaps of literal knowledge wherewith the world is ſo filled. The knowledge of God and Chriſt in the myſtery is no leſs than life eternal, in them and to them, who are taught in the new covenant, or miniſtration of the power of the endleſs life, ſo to know them.

THE

THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL OF Our LORD JESUS CHRIST,

AND THE

Bleſſed Effects thereof, teſtified to from Experience.

" The darkneſs is paſt, and the true light now ſhineth." 1 John ii. 8.

" Ariſe, ſhine; for thy light is come, and the glory of " the Lord is riſen upon thee: for behold, the dark- " neſs ſhall cover the earth, and groſs darkneſs the " people; but the Lord ſhall ariſe upon thee, and " his glory ſhall be ſeen upon thee." Iſai. lx. 2.

" When the Lord ſhall build up Sion, he ſhall appear " in his glory." Pſal. cii. 16. (indeed he doth ſo).

THE bleſſed meſſage which the apoſtles (who were ſent by Chriſt to preach the goſpel) heard of Chriſt, and were to declare to others, was, " That " God is light, and in him is no darkneſs at all," 1 John i. 5.

The end of Chriſt's ſending them with this meſſage was, that thereby (preaching it in the evidence and demonſtration of God's Spirit) they might " open " mens eyes, and turn them from darkneſs to light, " and from the power of Satan to God, that they " might receive forgiveneſs of ſins, and inheritance " among them that are ſanctified by faith that is in " him," Acts xxvi. 18.

Now the eye of the mind being opened, and the mind turned from the darkneſs within to the light within,

in, and from Satan's power to the power of God, which is revealed in the light, the ſoul in the light comes to ſee (over the darkneſs, and Satan who darkened it) the things of God and his kingdom, as they are revealed in the light, which makes them manifeſt.

As, Firſt, It ſees him, who is the rock, the holy foundation of God, the holy foundation of life in the ſoul, the living ſtone, by which all the other living ſtones are made alive, and they are taught of God to come to him as to a living ſtone, and ſo are built upon him, and become God's building, and new creation in him, 1 Pet. ii. 5. 2 Cor. v. 17. And here, in this light, none can miſs of the true coming, hearing the voice of the Father, and being drawn and taught by him to come to the Son, John vi. 44, 45.

Secondly, Here the true Jew's ſtate, the ſtate of the inward Jew, and the inward circumciſion, and the true worſhip (even the worſhip of the Father in Spirit and truth) is known. For the Jew inward is a child of light, begotten in the light, redeemed out of darkneſs, and dwells and walks in the light, as God is in the light, 1 John i. 7. And the circumciſion is not a fleſhly act; but the cutting off of that which is fleſhly from the mind by the Spirit and power of Chriſt. And the goſpel worſhip, or the worſhip of the Jew inward, is the worſhipping of God in the newneſs of the life of his Son.

Thirdly, Here is the true repentance from the dead nature and dead works, which no man can attain to of himſelf; but is God's gift through his Son, whom God hath appointed to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance and forgiveneſs of ſins, Acts v. 31. I ſay here, that repentance is known, waited for, and received. For not to men in the darkneſs, and loving the darkneſs, is the true repentance given; but to them that are turned to the light, to them is repentance given unto life, Acts xi. 18. compared with chap. xxvi. 17, 18.

Fourthly, Here the true faith, the precious gift of faith is received, whereby men believe in him who gives

gives life, and receive life from him. And this is the faith which gives acceſs to God, and gives victory over the world, and that which is contrary to God: the faith which is given in the light doth ſo; but the faith which men have in the darkneſs doth not ſo.

Fifthly, Here the croſs of Chriſt is known, which is an inward, living, ſpiritual thing, effectually crucifying that man that takes it up, and daily bears it, to all that is earthly and ſinful; and then the pure ſeed and life of Chriſt ſprings up in his earth, over the world, and every worldly thing, Gal. vi. 14.

Sixthly, Here the pure love ſprings in the heart, both to him that begets, and to him that is begotten. In the light there is nothing but love; but in the darkneſs there is no true love to be found; but the very love that is found there, is of the nature of enmity. It is the light of truth that purifieth the heart to the love unfeigned, 1 Pet. i. 22. Deut. xxx. 6.

Seventhly, Here the Lamb's patience and meekneſs is experienced, and the ſoul adorned with it. The Lamb is the light of the world, and they that are made lambs by him, partake of his ſweet and meek nature, learning of him to be meek and lowly in heart, and ſo have that patience and meekneſs from him *which no other can attain to*, Mat. xi. 29.

Eighthly, In the light the precious promiſes are fulfilled and partook of; which make them who partake of them, and in whom they are fulfilled, partakers of the divine nature; for the divine nature is not partook of in the darkneſs, but in him who is light. Man (who is darkneſs) cannot partake of the promiſes which belong to the children of light; but when, by the operation of God's power, his ſtate and nature is changed, and he is now no more darkneſs, but light in the Lord, then the promiſes which were made to the children of light he cometh to have a ſhare in, Eph. v. 8. 2 Pet. i. 4.

Laſtly, In the light the holy anointing is received, the voice of Chriſt heard, and the new everlaſting covenant, even the ſure mercies of David, made with the

the ſoul, Iſai. lv. 3. The law of the new covenant (even the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus) written in the mind, and the holy fear of the new covenant, which cleanſeth and keepeth clean, put in the heart, and the bleſſed Spirit of the Father given and received, which gives to thoſe that receive it power to become the ſons of God, cauſing them to walk in his ways, and to keep his ſtatutes and judgments, and to do them. Oh! bleſſed diſpenſation of life and holy power, which the Lord hath cauſed to break forth among a deſpiſed people in theſe latter days! Oh! that the ſons of men would hear and underſtand this precious loving-kindneſs of the Lord, and put their truſt under the ſhadow of his wings, and know what it is to be ſatisfied with the fatneſs of his ſpiritual goſpel-houſe, and to drink of the river of his pleaſures, and in his light to ſee light, Pſal. xxxvi. 7, 8, 9.

This opened in me this morning, in love and compaſſion towards the Papiſts. My bowels have often rolled over them, and been pained concerning them, to ſee how they are cloſed and ſhut up as to the true ſenſe and underſtanding of things of this nature. Oh! that they would prize the day of their viſitation, that they might hear the ſound of life both from others, and alſo in their own hearts, and the ſaving arm of the Lord might be inwardly revealed to them, and they effectually redeemed thereby!

I am no diſdainer of Papiſts, or any ſort of Proteſtants, nay, not of Turks or Jews; but a mourner becauſe of their ſeveral miſtakes, and a breather to the God of my life for tender mercy towards them all.

Aſtrop, 13th of the Seventh Month, 1678.

POSTSCRIPT.

AND in this light the true church, the goſpel church, the New Teſtament Church, is known; which is a church of the children of light, a building built in the light, which church is in God the Father, and in the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, 2 Theſſ. i. 1. In whom they are built together for an habitation of God, through the Spirit, Epheſ. ii. 22. Yea, in whom all the building, fitly framed together, groweth into an holy temple in the Lord, ver. 21. (for the Lord frameth them fitly together into a ſpiritual and holy building). And all that are here gathered out of the darkneſs into the light, who walk in the light, and abide in the light, are built upon the foundation of the apoſtles and prophets, Jeſus Chriſt himſelf being the chief corner-ſtone, ver. 20. And are no more ſtrangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the ſaints, and of the houſhold of God, ver. 19.

The goſpel church is the ſpiritual houſe of Jacob, which walk in the light of the Lord, Iſai. ii. 5. who go up to the mountain of the Lord, (to that which is revealed to be the mountain of God in the laſt days, even ſpiritual mount Sion, Heb. xii. 22.) to the houſe of the God of Jacob, where he teacheth his ſpiritual people, the inward Jews, of his ways, and they learn to walk in his paths: for out of this Sion ſhall go forth the law of the Spirit of life in Chriſt Jeſus, (in the days of the goſpel) and the Word of the Lord from this Jeruſalem, ver. 2, 3. For Jeruſalem which is above is free, which is the mother of all the children which are born of God's Spirit, Gal. iv. 26. John iii. 6. And ſhe being the mother of them all, nouriſheth them all with the Word of life, which goeth forth from her; and all her children know and juſtify her their mother, Mat. xi. 19. Oh! that all, both Papiſts and Proteſtants, knew this true mother-church, this mother of

of all the living, of whom none but the living are born, and who nourisheth all the living, and none else, with the law and Word of eternal life!

And if they knew the true church, the church which is of the true Jews, the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven, and did live and walk in the light of the Lamb, and follow the Leader, the Shepherd of Israel, and faithful Bishop of the soul, who overseeth and taketh care of the soul, they would learn, and come to know and experience these things following:

First, The dwelling-places of Mount Sion, and her assemblies, and God's creating upon every of them a *cloud and smoke* by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night, which is the defence upon all the glory that the Lord bringeth forth among his spiritual church and people, Isai. iv. 5.

Secondly, They would know the land of the inward Jews, and spiritual Judah, and the song sung therein, because of the strong city which the Lord builds there, and the salvation which he appoints for walls and bulwarks about it; and would see and know how none but the inward Jews, the inwardly circumcised and sanctified, even the righteous nation, that keepeth the truth, can enter by the gates into that city, Isai. xxvi. 1, 2. And they that dwell in that city, whose minds are stayed on the Lord, and who trust in him, the Lord will keep in perfect peace, ver. 3. Then Jerusalem is a quiet habitation indeed, and the resting and feeding-places in it are sure, Isa. xxxii. 18. and chap. xxxiii. 15, 20.

Thirdly, They would know the feast of fat things, which the Lord of hosts makes to all people that are here; to all people that come up to, and dwell on, his holy mountain, and serve and worship him in Spirit and truth. The Lord of hosts maketh such a feast as no eye hath seen, nor ear heard, nor can it enter into the heart of man to conceive what it is, but only by the Spirit of God; even a feast of fat things, even a feast of spiritual fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined,

refined, Isai. xxv. 6. They that are turned to the light, and follow Christ the light, shall not abide in darkness, but have the light of life, John viii. 12. Shall be translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of the dear Son, and they shall sup with Christ, and he with them, and both together drink of the fruit of the vine of life new in the Father's kingdom.

Fourthly, They shall infallibly know here, in this light which shines on God's holy mountain, the destroying or swallowing up of the face of the covering cast over all people, and the veil spread over all nations, Isai. xxv. 7. For the veil is cast over and spread in the darkness; but is done away and swallowed up in Christ the light: for the veil is done away in him, 2 Cor. iii. 14. And all that are in Christ, in his Spirit, in the light and liberty thereof, behold as in a glass the glory of the Lord, and are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the Spirit of the Lord, ver. 17, 18.

Lastly, Here the King of righteousness's highway is known, even the way of holiness, which the unclean cannot pass over; but the sanctified in the light do walk in; and the wayfaring men here, though fools, do not err in, Isai. xxxv. 8. For they that are taught of God in the new covenant, and follow the leading of his blessed Spirit, do not err.

Oh! that the true church were known, which is now come and coming out of the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved, who led and leads her out thence, into her own land of life and glory, where her light shines, and she ariseth and standeth upon her feet before the Lord, and the glory of the Lord shines upon her, and covers her! Happy is the eye that seeth this, and the soul that hath a share in it!

End of Vol. III.

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